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COVER:

Buildbase CCM's Tom Church rips up a Geoff Walker built berm for Sutty's camera

© Sutty

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The Reverend Jake Nicholls might only have been runner-up in the MX2 British Championship but the speedy Suffolk screamager appears to be the people's favourite as he dominates the DBR Awards

© Sutty

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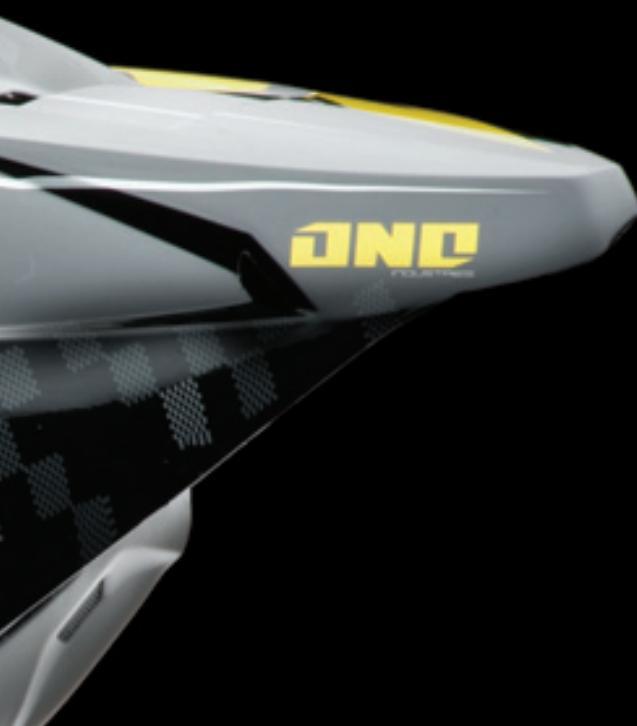
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Checkers


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COMMENT

Well, I guess I should stick with tradition and kick off my first comment of 2010 by wishing all our readers a hearty and heartfelt Happy New Year! And for me at least it's a case of so far so good. Since the early hours of January 1 nothing stronger than green tea has passed my lips, I've knocked the Marlboros on the head and the receptionist at my gym has already had enough of seeing my ugly mug at 7am. Okay, at the time of writing we're only seven days into the new decade but we've all got to start somewhere...

It's at this time of year when the 2010 championships will be won and lost – certainly the riders putting the hard work in now will be the ones taking the titles at the end of the season. Long gone are the days when natural talent was enough – if bike and body ain't dialled in then you're onto a hiding to nothing.

The weather at the moment is shocking – even DBR's home slum of Morecambe has been looking almost beautiful under a blanket of crisp white snow – and this certainly doesn't help the dialling in process. The lucky ones are already in Spain or the US but those with budgets that won't stretch to training camps in the sun can't be relishing the prospect of battling through the freeze to test parts and set-ups. I can sympathise because I've been there, done that and felt my frost-bitten nipples poke through the t-shirt.

I cut my teeth riding trials and as I advanced into my teens there were two dates I dreaded more than any other in the sporting calendar – Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Boxing Day always meant a Northern Centre trial which usually involved a white-knuckle drive along treacherous Cumbrian roads with my old man making like Juha Kankkunen in the TMX Renault Traffic. Bellowing obscenities at any fellow road user who didn't agree that full opposite lock was the only way to tackle icy hairpin bends, Sheriff Bill would fill the front of the van with turkey-flavoured farts and Golden Virginia smoke. If anyone needed the toilet they were more stuffed than yesterday's bird – we stopped only when we either reached our destination or the bike in the back broke free from its moorings and spewed petrol over my riding kit, the family dog and my sulking big sister who'd be forced to endure the journey to hell in an oil-stained deckchair strapped to the floor with a tie-down.

But at least the Cumbrian fells, lying under a blanket of fresh snow, had some sort of romantic beauty to them. William Wordsworth certainly wouldn't have been inspired to pen verses about the sub-zero temperatures and blizzard conditions that invariably used to greet us on a New Year's Day morning at Back Cown Quarry.

The famous Lancashire venue is an awesome place for trials but on January 1 it's also an awesome place for suffering. After one lap I'd have lost all feeling in my extremities, after two I'd have snot icicles hanging from both nostrils like polished jade and by the end of the third tour my nuts would have retreated so far into my body I appeared to have three Adam's apples. Meanwhile, my dad and his mates would be tucked up nice and warm in the front of the van, heater on full chat, pillaging their sons' butty boxes and passing round a bottle of brandy!

I could never remember the fourth lap of a NYD trial at Back Cown – everything was always a bit of a blur from the end of lap three until I was jolted back to my senses by the sensation of the van being thrown sideways on black ice at 60mph as we peeled off the M62 at junction 15...

So to all those stuck in Blighty for their 2010 preparations – stop moaning and get bloody on with it! *Sean*

Travis sets a new car long jump record on New Year's Eve



NEWSHUND!

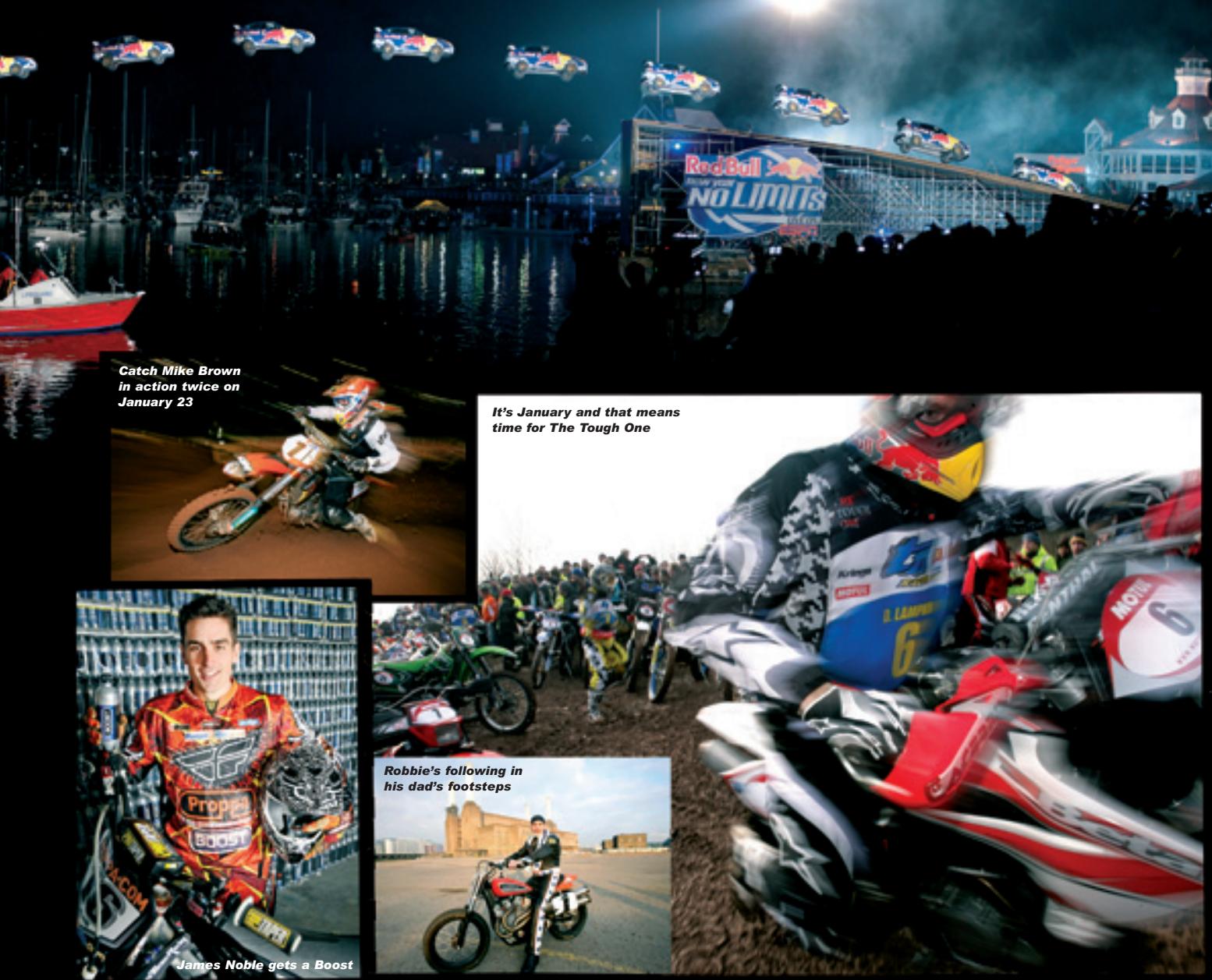
2010'S FIRST DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS DISHELD UP BY DEPUTY DAWG

Happy New Year people! No matter how great a way you saw in 2010 we bet it wasn't half as exciting as it was for Travis Pastrana who as part of the Red Bull No Limits series leapt his Subaru Impreza 269 feet to set a new world record in Long Beach. With 20,000 fans watching on, the 1999 AMA 125cc motocross champion hit the ramp at close to 90mph before flying across a harbour to a landing ramp situated on a barge some 200 feet away. "It was a wild ride," screamed Travis later. "The flight was awesome and I couldn't have asked for anything better!"

But as well as the bright and breezy there's tragic news to report on this month too as two pioneers of very different aspects of our sport unfortunately died recently. FMX legend Mike Cinquar was pronounced dead at his home in California on the morning of December 11. The 31-year-old X-Games silver medallist is said to have been struggling with life since suffering a career-ending back injury while filming for a movie with SX legend Jeremy McGrath way back in 2001. Initially unsure of what caused Mike's death, doctors theorise that some of his prescriptions may have been incompatible – toxicologists are still yet to confirm what the true cause was. Whatever the outcome, he'll be missed by many while his riding skills will never be forgotten.

On this side of the Atlantic the British motocross industry was in mourning on the morning of January 5 when word spread that the great Alec Wright had passed away following a heart attack suffered the evening before. As a man who touched the lives of many industry insiders, racers and fans over the years in his own inimitable style, 'Ace Boss' will be greatly missed – turn to page 14 for more on the life of this true individual who helped shape motocross into the sport it is today.

Back in AMA land once more and how cool is it that Nike are entering the motocross boot market with a 6.0 offering that'll be worn this year in AMA action by James Stewart and Ryan Dungey. Another cool bit of news surrounds New Jersey bad boy Jason Lawrence who had the best Christmas gift ever when the 2008 West Coast Lites SX champ – who had been sentenced to a full year of incarceration – was granted early release for good behaviour on December 24. It's now hoped that J-Law might return to the track in time for the opening round of the AMA Supercross series that kicked on January 9 – annoyingly just after this issue left for the printers but before it hits the shops. For a full and in-depth run down of who did what at Anaheim – and especially how British rookies Tommy Searle and Max Anstie fared in the Lites division – log on to www.dirtbikerider.com where



we'll have all the race action, news and gossip from the Angels Stadium.

And speaking of supercross the Future West promoted British championship resumes after its Christmas break with round three on **January 23** at Liverpool's Echo Arena before finishing up one week later in London's O2 Arena. For tickets to either round as well as other information, images and videos from this exciting series log on to www.britsx.net

If the snow ever clears up it looks like **January 23** is gonna be a busy day for off-road fans who'll be able to squeeze in a visit to The Tough One at Nantmawr Quarry before hot-footing it up to Liverpool for an evening of SX action. They're both guaranteed to be great events with the 2010 edition of Britain's toughest extreme enduro in particular promising to be a cracker. As host to the opening round of the all-new World Xtreme Enduro Championship – that also takes in Hells Gate, the Erzberg Rodeo, the Red Bull Romaniacs and Roof of Africa rally – the T1 entry list is like a who's who of off-road stars and includes David Knight, Dougie Lampkin, Taddy Blazusiak, Chris Birch, Paul Edmondson, Graham Jarvis, Mike Brown, Geoff Walker and TT wizard Conrad Cummings among others!

This year's event is also a little different from the

norm with an early morning qualifier deciding which 50 riders will enter the main event. There's also a hot lap challenge for the top contenders, a non-qualifiers race, the T1 itself and then The Boulder Dash which in my book all adds up to a great day's entertainment. Keep an eye on www.worevents.com for up to the minute details and breaking news.

In UK motocross news Steve Turner's Proppa.com Honda team are the latest to enter the energy drink wars in 2010 with the welcome arrival of a brand new sponsor to the sport – Boost Energy. The Leeds-based beverage company realise that by supporting Steve's squad they'll be able to deliver their brand to a new and relevant audience while the relationship is of course hugely beneficial to Turner's team too. "Boost is a perfect fit for the motocross industry and we're looking forward to being associated with such an exciting brand," says the STR squadron leader who spent the early part of January snowed in at his house that's situated high in the Lancashire hills. Turner will of course continue to run James Noble – who's looking well groomed of late – and Nathan Parker in the British championship and Red Bull Pro Nationals throughout 2010 on their sweet-looking black CRF450s.

And finally here's something that might make you

chuckle – nearly as much as FatCat Motoparc's Neil Mason chuckled when I randomly called him Russ last month... The more mature DBR reader might remember sitting down in front of the TV on a Saturday afternoon in May some 35 years ago and watching Evel Knievel attempt to jump 13 London buses in Wembley stadium live on ITV's World of Sport. If you've got a good memory – or access to YouTube – you'll remember he only cleared 12-and-a-half before bouncing down the landing ramp on his head with a 160kg Harley chasing down his broken ass. Despite suffering some broken bones Evel managed to walk away from it to the cheers of 90,000 ecstatic fans.

Evel's 47-year-old son Robbie is desperate to avenge his father's failure and so he's heading to London on May 22 to try and clear no fewer than 16 double-deckers on a modern day equivalent of the 750cc Harley Davidson that used to hurt his old man on a regular basis. "I'm not scared," says Robbie. "Daredevils are a dying breed and I'm proud to have been raised by one and to be one myself. I'm looking forward to this and although my dad's jump ended with broken bones I'm confident he'll be smiling down on this one."

More details on this leap next month plus a look at a whole heap more stuff that hasn't happened yet...





The Kawasaki factory
bosses had total respect
for Alec's abilities



Having a laugh with
WP's Henk Thuis

GODSPEED ACE BOSS

TEAM GREEN FOUNDER ALEC WRIGHT DIES

Alec Wright – or 'Mr Kawasaki' to three generations of motocross fans worldwide – died of a heart attack on the evening of January 4 at his home in Scolthern, Lincs. He was 77.

'Ace Boss' as he was known (and who called everyone else 'Ace' in return) had been a major driving force in the off-road industry for almost 50 years. Such was this one man's contribution to the off-road world he will leave a gaping hole that can never be filled.

Always forthright he could be both challenging and controversial and he had a wonderful way with words. Alec was also a driven man and that drive and his passion for bikes has given us a more colourful, exciting and professional sport. In creating the worldwide Team Green concept for Kawasaki in the '70s he set the standard which every team and manufacturer still strives for today.

Those who have signed up to ride for Alec

include Stefan Everts, Dave Thorpe, Kurt Nicoll, Stephen Sword, Georges Jobe and Paul Malin. Carl Nunn of course began his motocross career on a KX60 as part of Team Green but such was Alec's influence and longevity he'd also signed up Carl's dad Stuart to race a KX420 20 years before.

A great thinker, Alec created Team Green to give riders something to be part of. He saw that teams in football created massive followings and his ambition was to recreate that in motorcycle sport. Schoolboy motocross particularly excited him as he saw the possibility of riding bikes from the cradle to the grave. Ever the businessman, he also made sure that Kawasaki would benefit by making bikes for every capacity class.

While he may be regarded as the most influential figure ever in UK off-road motorcycle sport, his humble beginnings as a mechanic/salesman at Bill Slocombe's in the 1950s kept him in touch with

grassroots sport and the trade. Wearing any hat to suit the purpose he's supported and promoted the Bristol Dirt Bike Show, T+MX News, the British Enduro Championship, the BSMA, the AMCA, the ACU, the YMSA, the Welsh Trail Riders Association, the TRF and the Welsh Two Day Trial – and they're just the ones I can think of at the moment!

In his passing Alec leaves his dear wife Vi, sons Colin and Ian and grandson Jason as well as hundreds who admired and respected him.

Well done Ace – we'll not forget you...

The funeral service will be held at St Germain's Church, Scolthern, Lincolnshire, on Tuesday 19 January at 12.45pm. The family kindly requests donations to Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance Trust either via www.keepusflying.co.uk or the funeral director, Lincolnshire Co-operative Funeral Services, 12 Portland Street, Lincoln LN5 7JX.

Pete Plummer

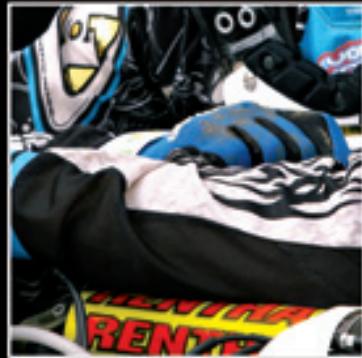
WHERE'S ZACH?

FIND OSBORNE AND WIN A PAIR
OF TCX PRO 2 BOOTS

Look closely at this piccie of UTAG Yamaha's Zach Osborne. Somewhere within the pages of this magazine we've superimposed the American rider's head onto someone else's body – and if you can find it you could win yourself a pair of top-of-the range TCX Pro 2 MX boots courtesy of our good buddies at Nevis Marketing.

Once you've worked out where's Zach you need to text the word **DBRZACH** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **February 11** with the first correct answer chosen at random getting the boots (don't worry, we'll give the winner a bell to get their size)...



GOLDEN PAD

WIN A PAIR OF RENTHAL HANDLEBARS

If you're going to go bar-to-bar then you better hope the bars in question ain't no soft steel stockers that'll bend quicker than an Argos awning when Hurricane Harry blows through the pits. In fact, you should be wringing reet robust Renthal and now just maybe you can...

Have a close look at our pic of this golden Renthal bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **February 11** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...

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THE REVEREND

BUSINESS AS USUAL!

THERE'S NO NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS IN THE NICHOLLS' CAMP – JAKE MADE HIS IN NOVEMBER WHEN HE STARTED TRAINING...

Words by Jake Nicholls Photo by Satty

Happy New Year everyone – hope you all have a safe and healthy one and are sticking to your New Year resolutions. I for one don't have any, instead I'm sticking to my goals that I set myself when I started training in November.

Everything has gone fairly well training wise. Steve and I have already put in some serious hours in the workshop boxing and hitting some hard circuits and I've been out in my own time doing my road work. I've had a couple days off here and there and been out game shooting a couple of times with my dad which is always a good laugh.

Last time out we were in the shooting wagon being taken to another stand and dad's friends had taken in a bit too much sloe gin – next thing I know we were all scrambling to get out of the wagon as one of them had let off a fire extinguisher. So instead of the usual green and brown attire to camouflage ourselves I looked like bloody Father Christmas on the rampage scrambling about with a 12 bore trying to shoot ducks!

As I said in my last column, Josh Coppins was coming to stay for a night and a couple of days training which went really well. We went out on the MTBs then in the afternoon Steve took Josh through some boxing and a little circuit with me which was cool. Since then my life's been pretty basic really – just training, watching MX on TV or reading MX and MTB magazines and basically just dreaming of racing.

I'm really looking forward to getting everything going again. I recently picked up a 2010 450 from KTM UK (big thanks to Shaun Sisterson) to have a play on over Christmas but just after I got it I picked up a little infection in my leg. It hasn't been anything too serious but caused me to go on antibiotics for a week over Christmas which sucked. Still, it gave me a little time to chill over the holiday period – but I just wanted to be outside.

Over Christmas we had former schoolboy champ Sam Davis and his mum over which was cool and saved me from sitting about with the family all day. So we were outside on Christmas Eve and spent the day digging a nice big berm and jump for the MTBs down one of our hills. It was pretty sketchy – Sam had a go after I'd done it a couple of times and nearly ate s**t so he stuck to digging after that.

On Boxing Day I was up at 7am and ready to roll out the big 450 and do some roosting. It's become a bit of a tradition with me and my mate Tom to ride at our local track, Belstead, on Boxing Day morning. The track was a little sloppy but after a while it was mega – I seriously enjoyed it and was so impressed with the bike. It's a tight

schoolboy-esque track but the machine just loved it. We finished about 1pm and went on to a family friend's party which was okay but I was once again the chauffeur.

The old weather's been a bit mental recently but weather never stops me and over the snowy period I had our neighbour Jamie's snowboard up on our hill trying to teach myself how to snowboard. I eventually got on okay and could turn both ways and even managed a board grab off a little jump we made.

Changing the subject a bit, I get annoyed when I read about people slating our country's weather, tracks, facilities etc. Granted the sport is changing and people are developing in different ways but, seriously, our tracks are good. Yeah, the weather's crap but just pick your time wisely, travel around our country and ride. Having rode on our tracks through January and February I will hopefully feel prepared for the muddy races that await me. It's the same in mountain biking to a certain extent – our riders are so good because they've grown up in the crappy weather and learnt to deal with it. It's fun at the end of the day!

Having said all that I intend on going to the annual KTM training camp in Spain on January 24 which I'm looking forward to. Then from there I hope to race at least once before the first round of the Maxxis British championship at Little Silver which starts a lot earlier than usual and offers a very exciting new race schedule with the shorter 20-minute races. I think this will be really good for my racing as it will sharpen me up so much for the GPs. I'm happy they're changing things up a bit and it sounds really exciting. So from here I'm carrying on with my hard training but upping the tempo now and also starting to ride a bit more although not too much – it's a very long year with the GPs and I want to stay fresh.

It's now Monday morning and I'm looking forward to getting my week under way – I've got to work on the 450 a bit then hopefully will ride later in the week. And I'm looking forward to boxing tomorrow night – every Tuesday I have a few mates over and Steve guides us in some sparring, then his nephew and I get in together and normally get well stuck in. I absolutely love it!

We had my ol' mate Wardy's go karting do for his birthday yesterday which was funny as the track was a bit frozen to start with. After about two hours of racing and getting covered in salt spray I came home with the first place trophy! Wooo!

Until next time, go hard!

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PRO JOB!

MC FEDERATION PREPARE FOR DOMESTIC DOMINATION

A new year brings new motivation and suddenly everyone is keen to get fitter and in shape. The MC Federation are no exception and are well on their way to getting match fit as they set to work on their master plan of making the Red Bull Pro Nationals the UK's premier motocross series.

For 2010 the series will be eight awesome two-day festival-style events incorporating the UK's top pros, the young guns of the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup and the hard-charging two-stroke racers of the Fuchs-Silkolene Two-Stroke British championship so, needless to say, the racing will be hot and coming thick and fast. There will also be the FMX tour at each and every round along with a motocross try-out area for the general public.

The big screen will be back with a pumping sound system and there will be live music throughout the weekend as well as plenty of other things to see and do to keep everyone entertained – keep your eyes peeled for more announcements over the coming weeks and months.

With a lot of effort going into making the Red Bull Pro Nationals festival events it would be easy to think that the MCF could take their eye off the ball regarding the racing but nothing could be further from the truth. Once again the tracks will be prepped to perfection and branded with plenty of colour and vibrancy, especially with existing series sponsorship partners upping their involvement and also some new ones joining the revolution!

Fuchs-Silkolene once again are more than happy to remain title partners of the official British two-stroke championship and now tyre giant Pirelli have signed up to be the official tyre supplier and partner for the Red Bull Pro Nationals! They will be offering up holeshot awards for the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup and also coming along with a service truck and giving a special discounted service to all MCF members.

MD Racing products have also stepped up to the plate and will be on hand with their new trade vehicle and with several other major companies looking to get involved before the first round at Foxhill on March 13/14 things are shaping up nicely.

RED BULL PRO NATIONALS

DATES AND VENUES >>

March 13/14	Foxhill, Wiltshire
April 3/4 –	Landrake, Cornwall
May 15/16	Canada Heights, Kent
June 26/27	Whitby, North Yorkshire
July 10/11	TBA
August 7/8	Pontrilas, Herefordshire
August 21/22	Canada Heights, Kent
September 18/19	Wakes Colne, Essex



CROCKSTAR

GUN FOR HIRE!

GORDY'S QUICK ON THE DRAW IN BIRMINGHAM BEFORE JETTING OUT TO SWEDEN FOR A BOXING DAY BRAWL IN MALMO...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Sutty

How the devil are you feeling now dear reader? Hopefully positive and enthused at the prospect of the new season ahead of you. My gut tells me that 2010 will be kind to the world and I am personally glad to be here to find out. I think we all learn a little from reflection. When I look back at my 2009 I don't like what I see so 2010 will have to be different.

Since I last wrote my column I have only been on two wheels when under the comfort of a roof. Supercross in Birmingham at the start of December and also supercross over Christmas in Malmo, Sweden. I really enjoy SX and seem to do quite well despite not practising or training for the events I enter. The other ability I have is to adapt to a bike that I haven't ever rode before. It's been something that I have had to learn to do throughout my career as most SX events I do are always on a borrowed bike with no chance to ride the bike prior to the event.

The opening round of the British Supercross Championship was no different as I had finished my business with PAR Honda and agreed terms to ride the SX series on a Paul Bird Motorsport Kawasaki. The bike is a hybrid product of a KX250F four-stroke chassis powered by a KX250 two-stroke motor – you can read all about it on pages 68 and 69 of this month's mag. The team had the bike especially built for me to race and prior to the event there was no time or dry enough ground to test it.

But I was confident it would be awesome and when I finally got it on the NEC SX track it was confirmed to me that it was just mega. I loved riding it and was so glad to have the team arrange the ride. It was just a stock motor but worked good enough for me to win the British Final and to also get second in the Pro Open Final. That was round one – round two was the next week at the same NEC venue but Future West had redesigned the track completely and my results were not so satisfying. I still had fun racing but found it very difficult to pass riders. I don't know why but I just seemed to never get any opportunities to pass whoever may have been in front.

In the British Final a guy in front of me

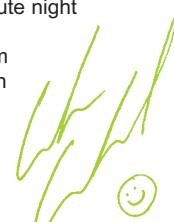
knocked a bale into my path and it got all jammed in my rear wheel – then the plastic bale covering melted all over my rear disc as I was reversing the bike to remove the bale so I had no rear brake for the rest of the race. The next two rounds are at the end of January in Liverpool and London and I'm eager to get there and get on that two-stroke Kwacker again.

I still haven't got any definite plans in place for what I'm going to do in 2010. I'm a free agent to take on any offers if anybody would like me to do anything for them. Just ask me at gcrockard@yahoo.com...

Crockard Motocross Spain is a new venture I have set up as winter training camps in Murcia. Most of my time recently has been spent organising the trips. I provide a service where I will transport your bike and kit out there and you fly down to be met by me to take you riding for two weeks. You can see all the details on my Facebook page. I wish that in years past when I was preparing for my season ahead that this service was available for me. Getting somewhere dry to ride in January and February isn't so easy in the UK.

Christmas and New Year's Eve were a delight for me. We had it at home and enjoyed the company of close friends and family. I shot off to Sweden on Boxing Day to race supercross for a couple of days before returning home on New Year's Eve. I kind of regretted agreeing to do that once I got into the Christmas spirit but followed through with my word and did go. I'm not sure I will race over the holidays if I am ever asked again. Christmas for me is for Christmas things.

Other craic is pretty quiet – I had a birthday pass, I did some coaching in very cold weather, I went to a Michael Jackson tribute night and loved it, the donkeys are in the stable, I was millimetres from rolling my van onto its roof down a 10 foot drop into a field down my lane in the snow, I finally learnt when to go Christmas shopping – I think I should quit boring you...



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SWORDY

BRING IT ON!

TRAINING AND TESTING IS GOING GREAT AND STEVE CAN'T WAIT TO RIDE HIS 450 IN ANGER...

Words by Stephen Sword Photo by Sutty

Happy New Year to you all and I hope you had a brilliant Christmas! Training has been great this month and I'm feeling really good – I've been out testing and it's all going in the right direction. I can't wait until January when we'll get out on the bike more and get in as much testing as possible so I can get bike fit ready for racing.

I'm really looking forward to racing in MX1 – I really am enjoying riding a 450, it's definitely the change that I have been needing. I feel strong and confident for 2010 already which is a great place for me to be at mentally. I'm looking forward to the first British at the end of February and feel I will be 100 per cent ready by then. Bring on the 2010 racing season!

The month started by doing a few more presentations which are always good for me as I like meeting all the people who are passionate about the sport. It's one of the only sports where you always have to give 100 per cent and don't get much in return yet it is so expensive to do. Like I say, it demands passion!

One of the presentations fell on Jodie's 30th birthday so instead we celebrated it on the Sunday by going out for food with friends and family which was nice and it was good to catch up with them all. The following weekend we celebrated it together. Every year we go to London for the weekend where we walk around Covent Garden and go to the theatre. This year we went to watch Dirty Dancing which was good and we bumped into someone from MX – one of Mel Pocock's mates – who was sat just two seats up from us. It's such a small world. We went to get some freshly made waffles and mulled wine which were the best and warmed us up as it was so cold.

After the show Jodie made me go to the Pasaje Del Terror, I saw it on Jonathan Ross but didn't know that much about it. Stupidly I agreed to do it so at around 11pm we entered the building. I won't say too much in case you want to check it out but it definitely made me realise that when I need to I can run on my bad leg. Seriously, if you can check it out it is well worth it. The next day we got up and walked around Hyde Park where there was an amazing

Christmas Fair – Ayrton will love it when he is older so I can't wait for that.

I had the best Christmas present in the whole wide world from Jodie and Ayrton. I have wanted one since I was 10 and always promised myself that when I had a room big enough I'd get one – a pool table! It's black and white – a beauty. I could not have dreamed of a better present. It made my Christmas perfect. They had to install it two days before Christmas and had to do it at night so Ayrton woke up and then it would not fit up the stairs so they had to take it apart. They still marked the walls getting up to the top floor but I was telling them to do whatever it took to get it up there. Jodie did not take the same view but, luckily for me, she was stuck looking after Ayrton so could not see until after it was upstairs! There was no way I was letting them leave without it all done and in the room. They were here until 11pm but it looks amazing.

Christmas was great and Ayrton was dressed as one of Santa's little helpers – he's teething so even had the red cheeks and he's not the skinniest of children either so could not have looked more elf-like if he tried. He was so spoilt as it was his first Christmas and our house was covered in toys – we spent the day at ours with Jodie's family so it was a lovely day although we did not stop. Next year we have all agreed to go out for food to make it easier and have more time to relax as Jodie was just stuck in the kitchen all day. Overall, it was a lovely Christmas.

We stayed in New Year's Eve and had a quiet one, staying up to see the New Year in. Just as we got into bed the baby decided he wanted to join us as he is not so well at the moment so we ended up all three of us in the bed together all night. Who says romance dies when you have a baby! On New Year's Day my dad and Shirley came down and we went out for food which was nice and relaxing – they love seeing Ayrton and, once again, he was spoiled rotten.

That's your lot for now but next month I'll be able to report back on how testing is going – until then stay safe...

Braaaaaap!

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2010 RANGE AVAILABLE NOW

**KIDS
SERIES****NO FEAR****KIDS PRIME EVO
HELMETS****NO FEAR 2010**

(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)



(A) SPIKE STRIP BLUE
Jersey
 REF: 2204KB
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1204KB
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



(B) SPIKE STRIP GREEN
Jersey
 REF: 2202GN
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1202GN
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



(C) ORANGE
Jersey
 REF: 2204OR
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1204OR
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



(D) BLACK
Jersey
 REF: 2202BK
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1204OR
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



(E) RED
Jersey
 REF: 2202RD
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1202RD
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



PRIME EVO SKULIOSIS
Helmet
 REF: 6208RS
 S: S-L



PRIME EVO PEG LEG
Helmet
 REF: 6208PG
 S: S-L



PRIME EVO GREED
Helmet
 REF: 6208NE
 S: S-L



(E) RED
Jersey
 REF: 2202RD
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1202RD
 S: 18-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3202BK
 S: S-XL



(F) SKULIOSIS
Jersey
 REF: 2204RS
 S: XS-L
Pant
 REF: 1204RS
 S: 20-28
Glove
 REF: 3203RS
 S: S-XL



(G) PEG LEG
Jersey
 REF: 2204PG
 S: XS-L
Pant
 REF: 1204PG
 S: 20-28
Quartz Glove
 REF: 3204BK
 S: S-XL



(H) GREED
Jersey
 REF: 2204NE
 S: XS-XL
Pant
 REF: 1204NE
 S: 20-28
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AT YOUR DEALERS NOW AND IF IT'S NOT ASK THEM WHY?



BILLY MACKENZIE

WE'VE HEADED SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR TO TRACK DOWN EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE HAGGIS LOVING BAGPIPER (NO, NOT THAT TYPE OF BAGPIPING...WE HOPE!) FOR THIS MONTH'S ANTIPODEAN PRO PROBE.

Interview and photo by JP O'Connell

Q: What are your thoughts on there being an all Scottish MX des Nations team?

Jim Weston, Frome

A: "Not sure, don't want to be biased either way but if there was a Scottish team then Scotland and England would probably be on the podium at the end of the day because of the rivalry we have!"

Q: I'm gutted you've left the GPs – is it in your plans to return at any stage?

Angus Stoodley, Newquay

A: "Well thanks mate and, yes, I would like to come home at some point. Think of my Aussie trip as a gap year. I need to refresh myself from all the injuries last year, I love Oz and I feel like I need to get back on a bike that suits me. I had a lot of trouble adapting to the Honda last year with it being a new bike and stuff, I didn't really enjoy riding and my injuries added to all of that. I had researched the Aussie championship loads before making a decision and it's a really nice up-and-coming series."

"Also with the supercross being a new series it is the best time to start learning that. If I had stayed in Europe I would never have got the chance to learn. Coming to Oz was more about my love for riding a motocross bike than it was about money or being pissed off with Britain or anything like that. I just want to love riding again and when that happens I know I will ride my best. So if things go well and I go the speed I know I can go out here then a return or a trip to the States might be possible."

Q: After all of your injuries last season are you now 100 per cent fit?

Keith Fursey, Northampton

A: "Yeah it's all good, part and parcel of being a motocross racer. Rib still sticks out a little, thumb is still fat with scar tissue but none of it bothers me when I ride. Last month I have been training so a few more months of working out and riding and I'll be ready for the season."

Q: You tend to get a lot of s**t on certain message boards – do you read it and if so does it have an adverse affect on you?

Jason Knowles, Dudley

A: "Ha ha ha! No, not anymore. I remember way back in the day when I first found out about the message boards I used to get pissed off with anything anyone said but then I got wise to what was actually going on. It's all just absolute bulls**t! So now I just add fuel to the fire and wind people up if I ever go on. It's just ridiculous and funny!"

Q: Will it seem strange not having the support of 'Big Bill' at the races?

Luke Andrews, Ipswich

A: "I don't know – Big Bill hasn't been to many of the races really, he's too busy doing his garden and shouting at all the kids for playing outside on their bikes! Only joking dad! Big Bill has kinda left me and the team to do our own thing the last couple of years – CAS are a top team and he always has his spies checking up on me to make sure I'm working hard."

"I was working with Dobby and Kirk last year so he was happy knowing I was training hard. However, when I do come back I'm gonna hire Big Bill to be my motivator. It will be a hellish year but he is probably the only one who can get in my head and get the best out of me."

Q: In hindsight would you change anything about the way in which you handled things in the lead up to your departure?

James Hartland, Sunderland

A: "Not really. The way I left was how I felt and never regret what you say because it reminds you of how you felt at the time."

Q: Is your training regime any different to how it was in the UK?

Jack Rawlins, Redruth

A: "Yes, very different. I'm doing a lot more cardio, lots of running and cycling, I'm trying to limit any possibility that leads to arm pump! When I first landed here and started riding supercross I got the hang of it pretty quickly and was riding very fluent. Then I started my weights training and the next time I rode I pumped up straight away. So I'm just using my own body weight for strength like push-ups, sit-ups, chin-ups, dips etc and doing loads of cycling, running, mountain biking, football, rowing etc..."

Q: How does your new Kawasaki compare to the factory Honda?

Rob Stoker, Gateshead

A: "It's very similar to my '08 Honda and, of course, the bike I rode in '07. It's really nice and fits me so well. The power is unbelievable and the bike is very solid and stable – the power gets to the ground and doesn't move around a lot. I feel a lot smoother on the Kawasaki and I am excited about racing it again. I had a great year in '07 on the factory Kawasaki and we will be getting parts and info from Pro Circuit and the factory so I'm really looking forward to it."

Q: Does it concern you that you may slip from the minds of the British MX fans?

Mike Tamblin, Wrexham

A: "Yeah it does, the British fans have always understood me and enjoy how I race. But I want to come back faster and stronger so if that happens you guys will love it! I'm going to try my best to have my media in the right direction so anyone who wants to follow can – I'll sort out my website and stuff and I'm sure you can read about it all in DBR."

Q: Is it a realistic goal for you to win the Aussie championship at your first try?

Lee Newby, Crewe

A: "Yes I think so, that's why Kawasaki have hired me and that's what I want to do."

Q: Have you put a shrimp on the barbie yet and can I have that tanner back you owe me?

Bryan MacKenzie, Scotland

A: "You know I don't like seafood. Do I really owe you a tanner?"

NEXT MONTH

BRAD ANDERSON >>

Next month we've got the current British MX1 champion waiting in the wings so fire up the laptop you got for Christmas and email your questions to us at the usual address at dbrprobe@googlemail.com

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RICCI RACERS!

WITH A TASTE FOR GOOD ESPRESSO IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO INTERVIEW THE ITALIAN-BASED TEAMS AND THIS MONTH WE TRACKED DOWN RICCI RACING YAMAHA PILOTS DAVIDE GUARNERI AND NICOLAS AUBIN TO FIND OUT HOW THEY MEASURE UP IN OUR REGULAR TEST OF TESTICULAR FORTITUDE...

Interview and photo by JP O'Connell

DBR: Who would play you in a film of your life?

DG: "Ah, that is a nice question. I've never really thought about it! I think Matt Damon, he can be funny and serious."

NA: "I think a very special man! Maybe Brad Pitt from Ocean's 11, 12 and 13..."

DBR: When did you last clean an air filter?

DG: "I think it was in the winter last year, we have a sponsor who provides us with filters."

NA: "I think that was about one year ago."

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

DG: "No! With the two-stroke I could change a piston or a clutch but with the four-stroke, no."

NA: "No, I leave all of that to my mechanic!"

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you have killed?

DG: "Not that I have killed myself. In Italy, where I grew up, we lived in a mountain area and my father and grandfather they would hunt and we would eat that."

NA: "Never. I like fishing but I never get the time."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

DG: "Hmmm...a lot! I think it is 11 plus four knee injuries and maybe three ligaments."

NA: "I have broken three."

DBR: Can you eat spaghetti without a spoon?

DG: "I don't use a spoon, in Italy that is bad table manners – my dad, he always use a spoon!"

NA: "Yeah."

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

DG: "I like chocolate but I am allergic to it, I also like to eat chips – not every week but maybe every other!"

NA: (Laughing) "Any English food! No, seriously, I do like chicken wings."

DBR: Do you own a pair of slippers?

DG: "Yes I do, where I live in the mountain it is cold."

NA: "I do but I only wear them in my bedroom!"

DBR: You're in second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out on the last corner for the win?

DG: "Of course! I try everything that is possible to win."

NA: "If it has been a clean race then maybe I can push him a little – maybe a little contact – but I wouldn't clean him out. If he's pushed me before then, yes, he will get some back."

DBR: What is the highlight of your career so far?

DG: "I think one of the best moments was my first MX2 GP win, in Namur in '07. For me also, coming back from my knee injury this year everybody was thinking maybe I come back not so fast but at the first round of the Italian championship I win the moto and show everybody that I am back."

NA: "My win in Loket, 2007!"

DBR: What car do you drive?

DG: "Porsche Cayenne S..."

NA: "A Renault Traffic!"

DBR: And if money were no object?

DG: "Koenigsegg CCX or Ford GTO 1967."

NA: "A Dodge Ram, I like to look at the sporty cars but I don't want to own one – I prefer my camper."

DBR: Have you ever blamed a poor result on a non-existent mechanical issue?

DG: "If nothing was broken then no."

NA: "No, I always try to be honest."

DBR: Have you ever been arrested?

DG: "Not yet!"

NA: "No...actually yes, at last year's des Nations. It was strange because I was near the track (in the evening) they thought I had been damaging it. I had to explain to

the police that I was with a group of people and had done nothing. After 15 minutes they let me go."

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

DG: (Laughing) "For sure my nose! It's big and I smash it in the ground many times!"

NA: "Nothing! I like the way that I am."

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk?

DG: "I have never done anything too stupid when I am drunk, I try to never really go over the limit."

NA: "Nothing really, I don't drink so much."

DBR: If you could meet any person – alive or dead – who would it be?

DG: "Rocky Balboa, a strong Italian who came up from nothing!"

NA: "Nobody really, nobody special."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

DG: "A bike, a big American fuel pump and a huge roll of Scotch tape – you can do anything with that tape, right?"

NA: "My girlfriend, my family and a bike."

DBR: What's your favourite film?

DG: "Lord of the Rings."

NA: "I prefer a series, I like Prison Break."

DBR: What's your most annoying habit?

DG: "Whatever I think is right!"

NA: "I'm maybe a little too easy going both in life and on the track."

DBR: Where is your favourite place on Earth?

DG: "Well I haven't been to every place on Earth yet but a strange place that I really like is Japan."

You can see all of the modern technology but you can also see all of the old traditional side, it's like a country of opposites."

NA: "In my bed!"

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

DG: "No, nothing especially."

NA: "Yes, snakes."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

DG: "There is nothing that is more important than anything else, it's nice to have a balance."

NA: "My friends and family, material things are not so important."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight?

DG: "Not a real one, no."

NA: "Yes, when I was driving I flipped someone the bird and we ended up having a fight!"

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

DG: "Yes, because sex you can find, winning a race you can't!"

NA: "No!"

DBR: How do you have your steak?

DG: "Very well done."

NA: "Medium rare."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

DG: "Blonde."

NA: "I'm not worried, the eyes are more important."

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?

DG: "I play the guitar, nobody knows that."

NA: "During the race weekend fans see the professional side of me, during the week I am not so professional – I am too laidback and maybe too messy!"



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PARTIED OUT!

THE FESTIVE FESTIVITIES ARE OVER AND ALL ACROSS IRELAND RIDERS ARE GETTING READY FOR THE COMING SEASON...

Words by Stevie Mills Photo by Sutty

Thank goodness it's over! I feel like I've eaten a double-decker bus – complete with passengers – and drank a sea of alcohol, all in the name of Christmas. Being a sociable creature I don't like to offend people who offer to buy me a drink but now Nightman will remain in his cage until at least the end of January or my name is not Tony Blair!

In with the new and out with the old – 2010 is going to be a cracking season for Irish motocross riders, both at home and abroad, so here's a little preview of who's doing what next season.

The British MX2 series is, as always, a hotbed of talent with last year's schoolies trying to break into the big time and our main interest will be in Barr, Irwin and Allingham.

Martin Barr is a contender, although right now his ride is in question. Relentless have refocused their marketing campaign and MX seems to have been a casualty in their reshuffle of sponsorship funding. Of course, Martin would have been on all the top team's shopping lists – if they had known he was on the market. Let's hope that by the time DBR goes to print our Barty is fixed up with machinery capable of doing the job in hand – the Larne man has been training hard and is in the best shape of his life for a title shot.

Graeme Irwin knows that he has to perform at the Maxxis this year and it will also be his rookie season in GP land. The KTM UK teenager is ready, willing and able to mix it up with the established front runners in the domestic MX2 series. Graeme and team-mate Jake Nicholls are currently in Belgium, training and testing for the forthcoming season. Graeme called down to Risk Racing's European HQ over the Christmas

holidays to pick up some goodies and while there he was served an extremely big portion of whup-ass as yours truly gave him a lesson in MX Reflex on the X Box!

Former British MXY2 champion Edward Allingham is no stranger to the Maxxis paddock, although I'm sure racing full-time back in Blighty will take a little getting used to as Ed raced in California last season. Under the guidance of new team boss Steve Dixon, young Edward will continue to flourish. Racing a YZ250F UTAG Yamaha with all the trimmings will be a tonic for Ed while training with GP winner Zach Osborne will be motivation enough to spur Ed along to the next rung on the ladder of his career – good luck!

Fast becoming tradition, the Knock club's New Year's Day XC event enjoyed the support of a cross selection of top racers from all disciplines of motorcycle sport with WSB, enduro, trials and MX riders braving the sub zero temperatures in the name of fun. For many this was the first time back in saddle since October so the first lap resembled an amateur rodeo.

At the end of the day it was enduro star 'Factory' Phil McLaughlin on the Electraction TM and the internationally acclaimed party animal Niki Adair who claimed the top step of the podium. Graeme Irwin admitted it took a few laps to find his mojo which is scary to watch as Graeme only rides in one mode – flat out! Once the KTM UK racer found his feet, he and partner Jordan Scott did enough to fill the middle step on the podium. WSB contender Jonathan Rea enjoyed a bonding day with his new JAR Racing signing David Goosen and the pair finished in third place in front of some pretty distinguished

KTM UK rider Graeme Irwin knows he must make a real impact on the Maxxis series this year

and decorated riders.

Gordon Crockard has opened up a winter training camp in Spain in February and March. The GP winner will be on hand to pass on some of that legendary Crock Star knowledge and has created three different packages to suit individual requirements and wallet size. For more details contact the man himself via email at gcrockard@yahoo.com

Double Irish champ in '09, Stuart Edmonds has confirmed that he will concentrate on British MX1 and the Red Bull Pro Nationals for TM UK this coming season. Stuart's hard-charging style will be missed on the Irish championship scene although he may well make the odd cameo appearance throughout the season.

Tommy Merton and Ian Marshal will run under the Watt Kawasaki banner in 2010. Merton will focus on an assault on the Ulster Open championship while Marshal will aim to break into the top six in the MX2 series.

This has always been the quietest month in the MX calendar – everybody is working towards rebuilding their fitness levels in the gym while the lucky get to ride in warmer climates in preparation for the forthcoming madness.

The change to a three-race format by the ACU signals the need to provide both rider and spectator with more value for money. Yes, 2010 will provide great racing but a new approach to PR and marketing of events will make the difference between a successful club and one that will fade into the shadows. As Mr Motocross would say "help your club help your sport" so go to your club meetings and get involved...

See you in the thaw!

Stevie
dirtbikerider 27



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Black



Blue



Red

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Christophe Nambotin is a potential world title winner for Gas Gas



FALSE START?

WE SHOULD SAVE OUR NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS UNTIL THE WEATHER ACTUALLY GIVES US SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE – LIKE AN ACTION-PACKED 2010 WEC...

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

January is a funny old month. After all of the hype and shenanigans that surround the arrival and celebration of the New Year no sooner does January finally roll around than you realise there's still a good few months to wait before most major championships fire into action. The weather's s**t, the snow has turned our green and pleasant land white and brown and, well, shouldn't off-road motorcycle riders and racers save NYE celebrations until spring when we really have something to celebrate – the arrival of better weather, more daylight and weekends of uninterrupted riding?

The dawning of the New Year means one thing to motorcycle racers – new beginnings. For those that got it right in '09 that means the challenge of repeating their fine form, be it with their existing team or a new family and machinery. For those that didn't fair quite so well it offers a clean slate, the chance to right wrongs and generally do better.

As far as the major teams competing in the World Enduro Championship are concerned 2010 will be an important and challenging year. Those that have enjoyed success in past years are under more pressure than ever before to repeat it, while several of the 'B' teams now have what it takes to ruffle the big boys' feathers.

When you're at the top if you can't stay there then there's only one place you can go – down. And KTM certainly don't want to do that. Having netted two WEC titles in '09 the Austrian firm have redistributed their riders for 2010 in the hope of returning to their Enduro 1, Enduro 2

and Enduro 3 class clean sweeps in '05 and '06. Welcoming back former riders, placing some on machinery they've never raced on before in the WEC and putting others in new classes to face new competitors means the pressure to perform within the KTM factory team has never been higher. The only team that has a genuine chance of winning in all senior classes, KTM know that success won't come easy in '10. Arguably the team that has the hardest job of all – staying at the top – you can bet your life they'll be ready for the challenge once the championship starts in April.

All other teams – Honda, Husqvarna, BMW, Gas Gas, TM, Husaberg and Beta – will be happy with one world title come the end of the year. And while some have more chance of claiming a WEC title than others, collectively they can ensure that all titles go the distance.

Honda's hopes of success remain with Mika Ahola. Moving back to the E2 class by virtue of the fact that Johnny Aubert won't be defending his title you have to say that Mika starts as favourite. Mika knows he has stiff competition but he's the man to beat. The rider that's delivered championship winning success to Honda three years running, in 2010 Mika and his team will be more than happy to win for a fourth consecutive season.

It's an important year for Husqvarna. But they'll have no riders competing in the E2 class. With three E1 riders and two in E3, Husqvarna know their best chance of championship success lies with Antoine Meo in E1. With the team split

into two groups – those using the company's new E1 class 250F and those using the long-serving E3 class two-strokes – having secured numerous podiums in '09 this year it's the E1 title Husqvarna are going after.

BMW also need to deliver success in 2010. Turning things around during the second half of '09 to end the season winning races, BMW need to win the E2 title with Juha Salminen this season. The task the German manufacturer faces is arguably the biggest of any team. Another season of disappointing or below par results simply won't cut it for BMW.

Husaberg, while mixing it up in the E2 class with Joakim Ljunggren, have once again invested in youth and the hope of securing another Enduro Junior title. With an increased presence and with more importer-supported riders competing in the WEC the chances of netting a senior title are unlikely. But increased competitiveness and an increased number of top 10 riders will be Husaberg's goal for the year.

Gas Gas and TM both have strong chances of success in 2010. But whether they will be able to challenge for world titles remains to be seen. If Christophe Nambotin for Gas Gas and Rodrig Thain for TM can perform as they did during last year's ISDE they will be well placed to challenge in E3 and E2. What both manufacturers have to do first, like all manufacturers, is prove themselves as regular podium challengers. Then, with a bit of good fortune and the occasional inspired performance, well, anything's possible in the WEC...



JOSH WATERMAN

BEST BRITISH YOUTH MOTOCROSS RACER >>

"Hey guys, I've just been told I've been awarded the DBR Best British Youth Motocross Racer. What an honour. I get *Dirt Bike Rider* every month. I had a brilliant 2009 season – I trained really hard with Mark Hucklebridge and got myself really fit as I knew 2009 was my last year and I wanted to win everything in the youth and I wanted to prove to myself and other people that I could do it. So to have it recognised by *Dirt Bike Rider* readers is awesome! Keep an eye out for me next season on my new team – Buff Husqvarna – and as Mark Hucklebridge keeps telling me 'go hard or go home'!"

THE GONG SHOW!

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Now that the dust has settled and we're a week or so into 2010 we can look back at the previous 12 months and safely say that 2009 was a blinding year for off-road sport.

Sure, it wasn't all good – Gordon Crockard's injury at Hawkstone and Shaun Simpson's broken leg got the season off to a crapper of a start and our 'active' top GP riders were struck down by a mixture of poor form and injury. But that's enough of the negatives – let's dwell on the positives.

In the world championships we saw Tony Cairoli come of age. We'd seen the super-exciting Italian win three MX2 world crowns but the way he came out and slammed (and t-boned) his way to the MX1 title in his debut season in the class was a shot in the arm for the sport. And with Tony moving up – and Christophe Pourcel and defending champ Tyla Rattray plus Brit star Tommy Searle all trying their luck Stateside – the door was thrown open for the young guns in MX2.

Initially it looked like Frenchman Gautier Paulin was going to rise to the challenge but when his compatriot Marvin Musquin attacked the former world BMX champ couldn't keep with him. Even a mid-season switch from Honda to KTM and resulting legal action forcing him to sit out a GP couldn't stop Marvellous Marv claiming the crown.

The GPs weren't an entirely happy hunting ground for the Brits. Before Simpson's injury it was him and Stephen Sword in MX2 and Billy MacKenzie in MX1 who were expected to fly the flag but Shaun went out early, Swordy was either hurt or strangely off form and Billiam

suffered a catalogue of evil injuries and awful offs.

So instead of a trio of Scots leading the way we saw Tom Church have his best-ever GP season to finish 15th – a great performance on a bike still very much in the developmental stages – and young Jake Nicholls begin to make his mark on the MX2 class in 17th. Both riders started the season slowly and came strong towards the end with The Reverend posting his best ever GP finish at the final round with eighth overall in Brazil.

And while TC and Jake were leading the way for the men our best world championship finish came in the women's series where Irish lassie Natalie Kane finished a fantastic third overall – skills Nat!

Back home domestic fans were treated to the Red Bull Pro Nationals where Carl Nunn and Neville Bradshaw ran out winners of a brand new series with seemingly endless potential while in the Maxxis championship Brad Anderson battled his way to first ever title to secure MX1 honours and Stephen Sword collected 125/MX2 crown #4.

Anyways, that's quite enough rambling – we're only recapping what you already know – so let's move on to the business in hand. The DBR Awards 2009.

For the last six weeks of the year we invited readers and website users to vote for their favourite riders in a number of categories through the magazine and on dirtbikerider.com and we had a mega response with thousands of votes cast.

So, without any further arsing around, the results are...

BRITISH OFF-ROAD PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

- 1: Jake Nicholls
- 2: Brad Anderson
- 3: Billy MacKenzie/Shaun Simpson

BEST BRITISH MOTOCROSS RACER

- 1: Jake Nicholls
- 2: Tommy Searle
- 3: Brad Anderson

BEST BRITISH AMATEUR MOTOCROSS RACER

- 1: Ben Saunders
- 2: Lee Dunham
- 3: David Campbell

BEST BRITISH YOUTH MOTOCROSS RACER

- 1: Josh Waterman
- 2: Ben Watson
- 3: Conrad Mewse

BEST FEMALE MOTOCROSS RACER

- 1: Natalie Kane
- 2: Ashley Fiolek
- 3: Livia Lancelot

BEST INTERNATIONAL MOTOCROSS RACER

- 1: Antonio Cairoli
- 2: James Stewart
- 3: Chad Reed

BEST FMX RIDER

- 1: Robbie Maddison
- 2: Nate Adams
- 3: Jeremy Lusk

CRASHER OF THE YEAR

- 1: Billy MacKenzie
- 2: Gordon Crockard
- 3: Mike Alessi

BEST INTERNATIONAL OFF-ROAD RACER

- 1: Mike Brown
- 2: Taddy Blazusiak
- 3: Johnny Aubert

BEST BRITISH OFF-ROAD RACER

- 1: David Knight
- 2: Paul Edmondson
- 3: Si Wakely

JAKE NICHOLLS

BRITISH OFF-ROAD PERSONALITY
OF THE YEAR/BEST BRITISH
MOTOCROSS RACER >>

"Well I was pretty damn shocked when I found out that I'd won these awards. I don't really know what to say other than thank you to everyone who voted for me. I'm pumped seeing that I was up against some pretty stiff opposition.

Granted it has been a tough year all round for other top British racers but I worked hard for all that I achieved in 2009 and I can assure you all it didn't come easy.

"Off-Road Personality of the Year is pretty cool as we're lucky to have plenty of personality throughout the British paddocks and to be voted Best British Motocross Racer is incredible. I've come from struggling through tough injuries – like a lot of others have – in my first couple of years at the top level to second in Britain and top Brit in MX2 GP. I'm under no illusions that if Shaun Simpson didn't get injured it would have been the same but you have to take what you can get in this sport.

"A big thank you to you all for your support in 2009 and for voting for me. Hope all you guys will be out there in 2010 supporting with the #45 herd..."





Z-CARBON CARBON GUARDS AND GUIDES

Carbon products have been blinging up off-road race machinery for the past decade or so and now it seems that you can get a sexy carbon guard, guide or garnish for every part of your dirt scooter. We've found these Z-Carbon bits from Madison fit well and withstand a fair bit of abuse too and seeing as though they're so reasonably priced we reckon it's about time you let them into your life n'all!

Price: Exhaust guard £39.99 Rear caliper guard £39.99 Drive guard £39.99 Chain guide £39.99
Supplier: madison.co.uk
Contact: 0870 034 7226



DIADORA STONE 3 TRIALS BOOT

With winter finally and firmly gripping the nation there's only one sensible way to get off-road riding fix and that's by whacking out a trials iron for a bit of feet-up fun. That's where these uber-trick Stone-3 boots from Diadora come in because they're the absolute dog's dangles for all types of trial bike activity – they're pretty much completely waterproof, super flexible and have a very grippy sole that help keep you upright while walking sections and placing that precautionous dab.

Price: £199.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190

APICO AIR FILTER

Costing less than a tenner, one of these brand new Apico air filters (that's actually made in Holland by those crazy Dutch foam fungineers at Twin Air – isn't that weird?) is a sound investment no matter if your bike is straight outta the crate or 40 years old. There's not a whole lot more to say really... I mean what more could you want to protect your engine from dust and dirt ingress than a sub-£10 product that's made by the best in the business? Good work Vesty peeps!

Price: £9.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



POLISPORT CHAIN GUIDE

Nylon block inserts for chain guides have always been a little bit dull and boring but that's all about to change with these sweet looking coloured jobbies from Polisport!

Price: £15.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



SIXSIXONE FLIGHT II HELMET

The SixSixOne Flight has long been a favourite helmet of the DBR wrecking crew and the Flight II is just as popular even with its polycarbonate shell. Don't let that fact put you off though because this ACU gold stamped helmet meets all the same safety standards as before, looks even better, fits just as well and is even a little lighter too!

Price: £149.99
Supplier: oneindustrieseurope.com
Contact: 01404 549696



MF MOTO HONDA RACING CLUTCH COVER

The Honda Racing clutch cover has always been considered the Holy Grail to retro Honda lovers and until now has been pretty exclusive to factory teams and serious collectors – until now! Manufactured in the UK this cover is machined from billet alloy to the exact same specs of the HRC part then glass blasted to give it the cast look of the original magnesium part. The cover fits all Honda CR250s from 1987 through to '01 and all CR500s from '97 to '02. These things are seriously trick and we all know that seriously trick never comes cheap. With an RRP of £175 they may sound expensive but believe us you wouldn't want to try to make one!

Price: £175
Supplier: MF Moto
Contact: 07823 885832



FOX RACING

TYPE O-NEGATIVE RACEWEAR

If you're proud to be loud then you're gonna love this new Type O-Negative racewear from Fox that seriously screams out 'I'm here! Look at me!' While the garish design might not be everybody's cup of tea you definitely can't argue about the performance, fit and function of the racewear it's on because with over 35 years of experience in the MX clothing business Fox Racing definitely know how to build some super-fantastic motocross kit.

Price: V3 helmet £225 Jersey £37

Pants £136 NGloves £28

Supplier: foxeurope.com

Contact: 0191 487 6100

MXM GRAPHICS UTAG TEAM GRAPHICS

MXM have a reputation for making some of the longest lasting and best looking graphics in the business which is why image conscious teams like Steve Dixon's UTAG Yamaha squad will use nothing less than what they consider to be the best. Until recently the only way you could get UTAG team graphics on your Yamahauler was to hook yourself up with a team ride but that's all changed now and MXM are able to offer UTAG team kits to the masses – yaaaay!

Price: Rad shroud only £45

Full kit including custom

printed backgrounds £145

Supplier: mxm.co.uk

Contact: 0191 286 0744



FRO SYSTEMS

BALANCE BIKE

If your nipper's too wee for a proper off-road machine then let them get their first MX fix with this wooden balance bike from Fro Systems. Coming in a whole heap of rider replica get-ups – or you can fully pimp your ride with help from www.evoke-concepts.co.uk – this is the ideal gift to send your toddler down the dirt track to off-road righteousness. Ride on!

Price: £48

Supplier: frosystems.com

Contact: 01527 850614



LAZER

MX HELMETS

Worn by some of the sport's leading riders, Lazer helmets have long been considered to be a great piece of protective headwear for the serious off-road enthusiast. And with products to suit everyone no matter what their particular taste or bank balance isn't it time you tried out a Lazer for yourself?

Price: Monster MX7 Evo Carbon Ultra Light £359.95 X6 Adult £89.95

Youth £79.95

Supplier: lazer-helmets.co.uk

Contact: 01778 394909

DREAD

RELENTLESS SUZUKI TEAM WEAR

Suzuki riders can now look as smart off the track as they're fast on it thanks to these awesome items from the Relentless Suzuki team range that also includes caps, beanies, jackets and polo shirts. Check out the whole lot at your local Suzuki speed shop right now...

Price: Team shirt £50 Team track top £45

Supplier: suzuki-gb.co.uk

Contact: Your local Suzuki off-road dealer...



WOMEN'S RIGHTS!

Hi, I'm a 14-year-old female MX rider and read DBR every month. However, I'm getting more and more frustrated with the lack of coverage of female motocross. It seems the only female coverage I see every month is the trophy babes that keep male readers glued to the page. Don't get me wrong, I'm no feminist and think there is a place for the crumpet but I'd like to see more representation of female motocrossers in DBR.

Sarah, Derby

Hi Sarah, thanks for your email. We're sorry you feel that way as we take female racing seriously – there's certainly nothing funny about watching Nat Kane WFO. The problem is that as there are less high-profile women racers there's less scope for articles but rest assured we'll be catching up with as many of the top women as possible in 2010.

CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY

I am contacting you as a reader and father of two boys madly into their MX bikes and racing. Unfortunately, last Sunday we tragically lost the younger one, Jake, aged just five years in an accident while practising ready for next season.

Jake was moving from a quad up to a KTM mini 50 this year and had been developing his skills in the four months he's had the bike and was showing amazing progress. His older brother Connor races with Dredgers (DLMX) in the 65s and next season they are holding a mini championship on a small track for the little ones which we were all so looking forward to.

We have received disgusting coverage of this tragedy from the press who have misreported this from the start, even when we released an official statement they only used his picture and name ignoring everything else. Jake was so young but last season won all three club championships in the Welsh grasstrack calendar which no rider has ever achieved before. Instead the press have reported this as if Jake was a newbie on a bike he had had for Christmas which is all totally untrue.

We also had the press camped outside hassling us and our neighbours and even Radio 2's Jeremy Vine Show had a phone-in using my lad's death as a campaigning tool to ban MX bikes for under 12s. This has caused us a great deal of distress at a time which is so hard to cope with. Anyway I was hoping you could please print a few words and small picture as a tribute to Jake.

Rob Wilson, via email

Rob, we can't comprehend what you and your family are going through at the moment. Our hearts go out to you...



GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk
All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address.
Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month a pair of Etnies RVM shoes.



'Jake Alexander Wilson from Carmarthen was an experienced and talented rider who was presented with the Jason Williams Memorial Trophy for 'Best Young Rider 2009'. He was a fun loving little lad with great potential who packed much into his short life. His family are struggling to come to terms with the void left by the loss of their youngest child. Jake will be greatly missed by all his family and friends and will be remembered as a beacon of joy by all whose lives he touched.'

UP THE MAC!

I was going to write to you after I read Billy Mac's page in December's issue but I never got round to it. But after reading in January's Rant the comments from the supposed Billy Mac fan Steve from Brighton it gave me a kick up the bum even more to do it.

Bloody well done to Billy Mac for doing what he wants and getting out of the UK while it's all doom and gloom here – I salute you for this because it's exactly what I'm trying to do and I'm in the process of getting my skills visa to emigrate to Australia.

I hope he continues to write for DBR so I can follow his progress and get a proper idea of what dirtbike riding is like over there which will make me even more motivated to get my ass over and get back riding in good weather.

Good luck for 2010 Macster and don't listen to planks like Steve who don't have any idea what they are talking about – so-called Billy fans 'my arse' as Jim Royle would say!

Marc Templeman, via email

Well said Marc and, yes, Billy will continue to write his column in DBR all the time he's tearing it up Down Under...

BREAKING NEWS!

Hey guys, loving the magazine (as always!) and recently got a story to tell ya to try and win a sick pair of Etnies!

I was on the phone recently to a friend who used to ride for UTAG Yamaha and heard a rumour that Matchams was re-opening for motocross again. I was so happy to hear this as I live around five minutes from the track. So on the first day off I got from work I thought I'd go and investigate by taking a trip up there with my dad.



Unfortunately, this never happened as I had a bit of a car accident on the way there. I've just got out of hospital with a broken neck and collarbone and bought the first copy of DBR I found and it had stickers so what better way to trick out my new accessory!

Hope ya likes the pic and can I ask you as I never got to find out are the rumours about Matchams true? Also, hope you get well soon dad – being in hospital must suck but I bet you ain't complaining about the nurses though!

Phill, Ringwood

Sorry Phill, it's a strict DBR policy that the Etnies only go to letter writers who can see to tie their own laces but we're loving the NHS-issue Leatt – top stickering skills! As for Matchams re-opening, as far as we know it's just a rumour but as soon as we find out something more concrete it'll be up on dirtbikerider.co.uk

A ROOKIE WRITES

First of all let me congratulate you on an awesome mag – keep up the good work guys.

What I am looking for is some advice on how a rookie to the sport like myself go about getting sponsorship to help finance the racing season? I am about to compete in my third race and was wondering do sponsors only care about the guys who are out there fighting for the wins week-in, week-out or does a newbie like myself stand a chance of getting any type of sponsorship at all? I presume it's highly unlikely in this period of economic crisis.

And finally do you have any advice on how to go about getting sponsorship?

Grant, via email

Good sponsors are still out there and if you look outside the industry they're not necessarily looking for race winners. Put a smart CV together with a few good pics and send it to local businesses explaining exactly what you think you can do for them. Good luck!



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OLDER AND WISER!

NO LONGER THE CHEEKY YOUNG GUN OF THE MARSHFIELD MAFIA, TOM CHURCH HAS MATURED INTO A SMART-THINKING GP RACER WHO COULD VERY WELL BE COMING INTO THE FORM OF HIS LIFE...

Words and photos by **Sutty**

“I can't believe that you didn't even ask me about money – or about coming from money,” jokes Buildbase CCM factory rider Tom Church at the end of our 90-minute chat about motocross, his recent marriage and some other random TC-related stuff. “It's normally all I ever get asked about – ‘what's it like being born with a silver spoon in your mouth?’”

Tom's painfully aware that there's little point in denying that the Church family have got a bob or two in the bank but in the grand scheme of things that's neither here nor there – you can't buy GP success and, besides, the decent moral upbringing that Mike and Paula Church have given their son (and two daughters – Lisa and Jess) is worth way more in life than anything money can bring. And by my reckoning it's some of the character built and lessons learned during that solid upbringing that have helped TC turn what was shaping up to be a problematic season in 2009 into his best ever world championship performance...

After five years racing for the Church family-owned and managed Molson team the recently turned 28-year-old Wiltshireman entered into the unknown in 2009 as he signed up for the factory CCM racing effort alongside Jason Dougan and Ray Rowson on the still relatively untried and untested CMX450. At that point nobody was really sure if the CCM

machine could be made competitive to run at the highest level but the Bolton-based manufacturer made a big commitment, brought in three-time 500cc world champion and British MX legend Dave Thorpe as Sporting Director and found the funds to run a three-man team in the MX1 world championship. Ready or not CCM were hitting the big time.

“At first when I was looking for a ride I didn't really consider the CCM thing because it was still very early days for them and at first I'm not sure if they even wanted me in the team or if I wanted to be in the team. But we talked and in the end one of the things that really attracted me to CCM is that it's an actual business and I like that because I know they're not just doing it for fun – they have a business plan in place and in these uncertain times that's a positive thing. I looked at how things were going to be so I did a two-year deal with them.

“We worked really hard through the winter and the season started off well but in the back of my mind I wasn't totally satisfied with everything. It was hard to say anything negative at that point because we were doing well at those early races. I won the MMX round at Little Silver and almost won the second moto in the mud at Canada Heights but then we went to the race at Langrish and what I was worrying about happening, happened.” >>



Hard work and steely determination have helped Tom rise through the ranks



NEW SENSATION

THE RED BULL PRO NATIONALS >>

*"I've only ever done one round but I really enjoyed it. Those guys at the MCF aren't there to cause any trouble, they're just there to run a really good championship and at the end of the day that should be commended. People are so quick to jump down on new things but instead of doing that why can't they just support somebody for trying to do something good. At the end of the day this is motocross and we're only so passionate about it because we love it so much so why do people enjoy talking so much s**t about the sport instead of celebrating and supporting all the good things."*

TEAM MATES

THORPEY >>

"I've worked with Dave on a training level for a long time but more recently it's been different with him being in a management position which is taking it to the next level I suppose. I guess that without realising it we have become very close – it's a bit like a father and son situation although not quite to that same level."

"I think that Dave is a good balance for me because he not only equals out my negative side but he's also very flat and calm no matter what the situation. He likes having fun though and he's a bit of a practical joker – he likes making prank calls, or you'll come out of the shower at the gym and all of a sudden there's the smallest towel in the world there and all your clothes are missing so you're hunting around the car park looking for your bag and he's nowhere to be seen."

SWORDY >>

"Stephen and I have worked together for so long so we know each other really well even though things are so different from what they were – he's got a kid now and I'm married! What happened? Sometimes you don't just realise how things change. I mean, when did we get so old? We were always the kids and coming through as the young guns and all of a sudden it's like what happened? He's the old guy and I'm sat here talking to you about retirement. To be honest though deep down he's the same as he's always been and I guess I am too. It will be really good having him in the team next year because at the end of the day he's a winner, he knows how to win championships and someone like that is always handy to have around."



Despite still only being March an unusually dry winter and warm spring sun gave the second round of the British championship a decidedly summery feel and as the first hardpack race of the year it soon became apparent that the CCM boys were struggling to find a decent set-up for the hard and fast conditions.

"Langrish was just a massive shock to me because I'd done really well at the Ken Hall the year before and Jason only lives like five minutes away and always excels at that place and he was struggling too so it was just weird. I honestly went there thinking I could win that race and to come away with just a ninth and a 10th while Jason only had a 16th was absolutely mind-blowing. I really couldn't put my finger on it – I'm experienced enough now to know that some days you're just not on it or feeling so good but on that day I went there feeling 100 per cent fit and fully fired up for the win and it all just went wrong."

"At that point it was difficult to say what the problem was. We knew we had handling problems but because the bike was totally

unknown we didn't know if it was the tyres or because the frame was rigid or not rigid enough – it was just like we had so many variables it was difficult to get our heads around. We'd also not done much hardpack testing at that point in the year – we'd been to Italy testing in January but it just rained all week so we ended up riding in more mud.

"After Langrish we had another mud race in Faenza and I finished eighth there but basically because it hammered it down. We had done a lot of work between the two races and achieved a lot but I was under no illusions that I could have done the same if it were dry, with or without the changes we'd made to the bike. In the wet things don't really matter and it's more down to the rider – you could probably do just as well at a mud race like that on a stock bike. At that point I was hoping for rain every single weekend to help neutralise the problems but at the same time I knew that the whole team was pulling together to find a fix."

"I always tried to only bring up a problem when I'd figured out a solution – or things to try which might help fix the problem – rather than just slating stuff. It's one thing to say 'that's bad – sort it out' but another to say 'that's not so good but if we do this it might help make things better'. I think that kind of diplomacy is something I learnt from my time with Molson, I always knew everything that was going on with the Molson team, I wasn't just a rider, I would be

sat in on meetings so I knew everything – if there was a problem I knew about it. I knew which sponsors had paid or if a product sponsor was holding back what we needed and through all that I've learnt all about the politics involved and how to go about things in the right way."

"Over the years I've learnt it's all a big balancing act and you can't just do what you want and throw it all to the wind. A lot of people said that at the start of the year I was just comparing everything at CCM to how it was at Molson and being unrealistic about what could be achieved but I never did – I was always adamant that we could do better with what we had. To say that an 18th or a 19th at the world championship was good enough in my opinion was wrong because I just felt like we were capable of more. If I thought that we were running 100 per cent and that's the best we could do I'd have said that's fair enough but it didn't feel like it was. Looking back they were hard times because we weren't getting the results we wanted and then I got ill after Faenza too which obviously didn't help."

After putting in a flu-induced lacklustre performance in Bulgaria, TC missed the next GP in Turkey altogether. "That's where Dave comes into his own because rather than keeping going at less than 100 per cent he advised me to stay at home and get better. That's something that if I was riding for Molson, MJ would have had a completely different view on it – even at the time

With a year of development in the can, TC's looking ahead to a successful 2010



he was like 'I can't believe you're not going to Turkey'. But Dave could see the bigger picture and after finishing 18th in moto one at Bulgaria and struggling to even finish the second moto he knew that I wasn't going to do anything until I got better."

Making a return to GP competition at Valkenswaard – a track he readily admits he really likes – TC disappointingly failed to score in either race but did bounce back to score in three out of four races in the Portuguese and Spanish GPs. From the Iberian Peninsula the world championship circus then headed to Mallory Park for the British GP – the biggest race of the year for the CCM team and its riders with all the increased pressure a home GP brings with it.

"Mallory for me was really bad. It was my home GP and that's the one that you really want to do well at and to not score in either race was a huge disappointment for sure. Jason only scored in one race too so that week we just knew we had to go back to the drawing board, work even harder than normal and make a lot of changes so that's exactly what we did.

"Better results came straight away then and because we'd been improving little things >>

TRAINING RITUALS

WORKING SMART >>

"I'm fitter than I've ever been now and that mostly comes from the experience of training hard over the years and finding out what works for me in particular. A lot of what I do now is what you'd call injury management – my shoulder isn't particularly good and both my knees have been operated on. A lot of my training is structured around them because I know if I look after those joints I'll be good for the year and if I don't then I get a lot of shoulder pain when I'm riding. When you look back I'm like 'if I knew 10 years ago what I know now...' but then who doesn't do that? I'm pretty methodical about things and probably take things to extremes but that's just the way I am. I've always worked hard but it's possible to work too hard – it's working smart that's the important thing."

Hard lessons learned over the last 20 years helped TC turn around his '09 season

D
R!
ER





WEDDING BELLES!

TC TIES KNOT IN BATH ABBEY BONANZA!
It's not just a career best finish in the world championships that Tom will remember 2009 for fondly as after the season finished he also married his long-term partner Claire in a rather spectacular ceremony held in Bath Abbey.

"Marrying Claire was just the best thing ever. Motocross is obviously a really big thing to me, it always has been and it always will be but as you get older you realise there's much more to life and Claire is one of those things."

"Our wedding was just perfect for what we wanted. We got married in Bath Abbey because Claire had grown up right near there and had done a lot of things in there as she was growing up. Even now a lot of her close friends work there so it's stuff like that that made it important for us to have it there – we didn't just choose it because it's the biggest place in Bath, there was way more to it than that. I was very nervous about it all but as soon as we got into it everything was perfect and I wouldn't change anything about our wedding day for the world."

PLANNING AHEAD

THE FUTURE!

"I have one more year with CCM – I feel like last year was the best year I ever had and I feel fitter and stronger than I've ever been. As long as I'm enjoying my racing I'll want to continue but I know that it's not gonna last forever. I get asked all the time what I'm going to do after motocross but I'm really not sure, maybe I'll stay in the industry because I've enjoyed it for the last 20 years or maybe I'll go and do something different. I don't know what the future holds and that's how I like it – it makes it a little bit more interesting that way."

on the bike for a long time and I was still feeling fully fit and focussed when we got new tyres before the French GP the change was dramatic. All of sudden we went from running 18th to 25th on average to having two 10ths and a 12th between us – the whole mood lifted in the team and things continued to get better. With better tyres we were able to refine the suspension set-up and little things like that which are important at this level of racing.

"If you look at the results for the rest of the year there was just constant improvement. If the first half of the season had been as successful as the second I just can't imagine how well we'd have done – I know for sure that a top three in the British championship would have been possible and I could have been even higher up than 15th in the world championship too. But even so overall it was my best year in the world championships and it's the most solid I've ever been so I'm definitely happy with how the year ended."

Can 2010 be as good? "Yeah, I think it can. I feel really positive about this coming season."

After a year of development I ended up with a bike that I really like. We've got a new frame coming soon too that I've helped with the development of so any problems we had with the old

frame have been changed so that's all good. We also all know how to get the best from each other now and the team's very settled – the only new member is Stephen and everyone knows him well anyway and knows what he's about so he'll be ready to slot right in. We're basically way more clued up than 12 months ago.

"Dave's plan for this year is for either Stephen or myself to win the British championship and for us to hopefully finish 1-2. That shows how much things have changed because last year the plan was to get up there near the front and increasing team exposure whereas this year it's more about winning and I don't think that that's above and beyond us at all."

"In the world championship my goal is to get inside the top 10 as many times as possible. Last year you had eight guys who were up there every week then there was a gap to another group which I elevated myself into during the second half of the year. My main aim is to bridge the gap to those leading guys and not just at a wet race – I mean at a dry race as well. All in all I just want another solid season and to score good points at every race. I really believe in myself and if I didn't I'd be some kind of idiot. I know how hard I've worked and I know what I'm capable of and I don't see why I can't be a winner."

Langrish in '09 highlighted the CMX450's serious lack of development



FOND FAREWELL

THE END OF THE MOLSON ERA >>

"Finishing the team was a really difficult decision to make for us all – especially for my dad who was really upset at the last race and stuff. Now he says he's glad that it worked out the way it did. Everyone seems to have gotten over it now. Lisa was over it straight away because she was pregnant and there was no doubt in her mind that she'd be out of it the next year anyway and that was that. I slotted right in at CCM and so the only person who maybe lost out at all was MJ. But he still came to every race last year and he enjoys it for what it is.

"I think it's a lot easier for us to be a normal family now and not end up talking about the team, the sponsors, the riders and mechanics or something like that all the time. We do still talk about motocross a lot because Josh will be there or Lisa and we always get around to talking about racing now but in a good way.

"The team was great while it lasted and got to be huge but we definitely ended it at the right time rather than going on one year too many which could have been a disappointing way for it to end. But as it was we ended on a high, in a really good place and that was the best thing that could have happened."







TY FIGHTER!

JUST EIGHT WEEKS AFTER A HORROR CRASH AT WESTON LEFT HIM IN A COMA AND WITH MULTIPLE INJURIES, 17-YEAR-OLD TY KELLETT IS BACK IN THE GYM AND SETTING HIS SIGHTS ON THE 2010 BEACH RACE...

Words and photos by
JP O'Connell

NO FEAR

ELEKTRON SERIES
ROGUE SERIES
SPECTRUM SERIES

2010

NO FEAR RANGE

2010 RANGE AVAILABLE NOW

2010 ELEKTRON SERIES

(A) BLUE JAGGED
Jersey
REF: 2200BL
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1200BL
S: 28-40
Formula Glove
REF: 3200BL
S: S-XXL

(B) GREY JAGGED
Jersey
REF: 2200GY
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1200GY
S: 28-38
Formula Glove
REF: 3200GY
S: S-XL

(C) CHARGED PATRIOT
Jersey
REF: 2200PB
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1200PB
S: 28-38
Formula Glove
REF: 3200BL
S: S-XL

(D) CHARGED GREEN
Jersey
REF: 2200GN
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1200GN
S: 28-38
Formula Glove
REF: 3200BK
S: S-XXL

(E) NITRO
Jersey
REF: 2200RD
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1200RD
S: 28-38
Formula Glove
REF: 3200RD
S: S-XL

2010 ROGUE SERIES

(A) FIRE
Jersey
REF: 2201FI
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201FI
S: S-XL
Glove
REF: 3201FI
S: S-XL

(B) RAPTOR
Jersey
REF: 2202CN
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201CN
S: S-XL
Glove
REF: 3201CN
S: S-XL

(C) RED
Jersey
REF: 2201RD
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201RD
S: 28-38
Glove
REF: 3201RD
S: S-XL

(D) BLUE SLASH
Jersey
REF: 2201BL
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201BL
S: 28-38
Glove
REF: 3201BL
S: S-XL

(E) BLACK SLASH
Jersey
REF: 2201BK
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201BK
S: 28-38
Glove
REF: 3201BK
S: S-XXL

(F) OLMEC BLUE
Jersey
REF: 2201OB
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201OB
S: 28-38
Glove
REF: 3201OB
S: S-XL

(G) OLMEC GREY
Jersey
REF: 2201OG
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1201OG
S: 28-38
Glove
REF: 3201OG
S: S-XL

2010 SPECTRUM SERIES

(A) BLACK
Jersey
REF: 2202BK
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202BK
S: 28-40
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BK
S: S-XL

(B) BLUE
Jersey
REF: 2202BL
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202BL
S: 28-40
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BL
S: S-XL

(C) ORANGE
Jersey
REF: 2202OR
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202OR
S: 28-40
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BK
S: S-XL

(D) SPIKE STRIP GREEN
Jersey
REF: 2202GN
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202GN
S: 28-38
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BK
S: S-XL

(E) SPIKE STRIP BLUE
Jersey
REF: 2202KB
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202KB
S: 28-40
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BK
S: S-XL

(F) PEG LEG
Jersey
REF: 2202PG
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202PG
S: 28-38
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202BK
S: S-XL

(G) SKULIOSIS
Jersey
REF: 2202RS
S: S-XXL
Pant
REF: 1202RS
S: 28-38
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202RS
S: S-XL

(H) GREED
Jersey
REF: 2202NE
S: S-XL
Pant
REF: 1202NE
S: 28-38
Quartz Glove
REF: 3202NE
S: S-XL

AT YOUR DEALERS NOW AND IF IT'S NOT ASK THEM WHY?

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**Ty and personal trainer
Russ Wells get to work
in the gym**

In order to maintain my boyish good looks and all-round buffness I occasionally drag myself to the local baths and splash about like Rolf Harris for a few minutes. It was on one of these rare occasions a few weeks ago that I bumped into a friend of mine – Russ Wells, a personal trainer at the Goldenstones Gym – with his newest recruit, Ty Kellett...

For those of you who don't know, Ty is the rider who was the most seriously injured in the infamous '09 Weston Beach Race pile-up. In fact, he was so seriously injured that message boards were reporting his demise as early as the Sunday evening. When you think that I'm writing this just eight weeks after that fateful day it only makes the story of Ty's recovery all the more remarkable.

In order to put the still ongoing Chinese whispers to bed we sat down with Ty and his mum Carol to find out exactly what happened that day and what's been happening since.

"I'd ridden Weston four times previously – three times in the 85s and in the main race last year when I finished 31st," explains Ty. "As far as this year goes I remember nothing, I've lost all of the Saturday although I can remember some of the evening and nothing at all of the Sunday. I woke up in the hospital thinking I must have come in the night before, in actual fact I'd been in for three weeks!"

For Ty's parents, Carol and Nibs, race day was the start of a nightmare. After watching the first 100 riders come through and with no sign of Ty, Carol immediately knew that something was wrong and it wasn't long before news of a start straight pile-up came filtering back. Unable to contact Nibs, Carol got through to her brother who told her to get down to the medical centre as Ty was involved.



"I ran not to the medical centre but to where the crash was, pushed my way through and jumped the railings onto the straight," remembers Carol. "It wasn't like a motorcycle crash on that beach, it was more like a war zone – you can't imagine all these bodies lying everywhere covered in foil blankets, all those bikes. I ran from rider to rider looking for Ty – eventually finding his bike – and someone confirmed he'd been taken to the medical centre.

"I ran down to the centre where I met Nibs and my brother, just as Ty's ambulance was leaving. They asked if we wanted the ambulance stopped but we told them to keep going as Ty needed urgent attention. We ran up to the road and flagged down a guy in a Transit and told him we desperately needed to get to the hospital and he just said 'jump in, I'll take you'. I don't know who he was but I'd really like to say thanks to him."

Ty was in a critical condition having slipped into a coma due to severe head injuries and was having breathing difficulties. After being scanned it was decided that Ty would be transferred to Frenchay Hospital, Bristol. Police roadblocks were put in place and along with a police escort Ty was in Frenchay by about 6pm that evening. With a medical team waiting Ty immediately went into surgery where his injuries were assessed.

"His list of injuries was horrendous," says Carol. "Obviously he had the brain/head injuries and was in a coma, he had lacerations to his lip

and nostrils that needed plastic surgery, lacerations to his liver, bruising to his right lung, kidney and heart, broke his tibia and fibula and broke his right shoulder. A fracture in his back was also found but the doctors weren't sure whether this was an earlier injury."

Ty was sedated and put on a ventilator with his parents being told to expect the worst. Things went from bad to worse when on day three Ty's lungs collapsed and then a chest infection set in. After a week and with good results from antibiotics it was decided that Ty would have a tracheostomy to minimise the risk of more infection. When Carol asked when the tracheostomy would be done the doctor replied 'oh maybe tomorrow' – it was the first time anybody had implied that Ty would still be alive 'tomorrow'.

On day 10 it was decided that Ty would be taken off sedation and hopefully out of his coma. Having played him music, talked and read texts to him throughout the day Ty still remained unconscious. Like something out of the movies, Nibs put two bandages into Ty's closed hands, lifted them into a racing posture and said 'come on son, here's the Renthals from your old 500' and within 10 minutes Ty was awake!

Three days later with the help of his physios Ty was on his feet and taking his first tentative steps towards his parents at the other end of the room...

"Ty still can't remember any of this," explains Carol. "But to see him walking



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towards us was just amazing, it was awesome. He was by no means better though, I mean he still wasn't talking, he couldn't sit up in bed, he just wasn't Ty. It sounds like an awful thing to say but you just want your son back."

Ty's recollections of events begin on the Monday morning – three weeks after the accident – when he woke up in hospital. "I realised that I must have been hurt and I kind of guessed that it was probably a bike accident as I couldn't remember anything about Weston," recalls Ty. "I didn't actually hurt anywhere and I didn't know why I was there, except that my talking was really quiet. I thought I might as well get up and have a shower but they wouldn't let me walk anywhere!"

Ty was to spend a further two weeks on the neurological ward followed by two weeks on the rehabilitation ward before leaving hospital on November 26 – six-and-a-half weeks after the accident.

Having seen a DVD of another rider with almost identical head injuries who came out of hospital and went straight into the gym, Ty, Carol and Nibs decided that was the path they wanted to follow and that Russ Wells was the man to take them down it. "Russ had done some training with Ty in the past," says Carol, "and we knew that if anybody could bring Ty back it had to be Russ. Russ understands what we need so I just phoned him up and asked if he could help."

Having been keeping himself up to date with Ty's progress through Jeff Perrett and via his dad who works with Nibs, Russ was more than happy to do what he could to help. "I got the phone call from Carol literally two days after they left the hospital," says Russ. "There are a lot of personal trainers out there so I am privileged that they have chosen me to help. I spoke to the manager of Goldenstones Leisure Centre, told him that I was prepared to personally train Ty in my own time and he stepped up and offered to sponsor Ty for a year's membership to the centre."

After sitting down with Ty and discussing all the injuries – how they now affected him, where he felt weakest and what concerns he had – Russ felt that he definitely had something to offer and would be able to help so a programme was put together and 24 hours later Ty was in the gym. Let's put this into perspective – eight weeks earlier he was in a coma, on a ventilator, having sustained brain injuries and broken bones, with doctors unprepared to discuss the following day!

The plan is for two to three training sessions a week working primarily on hand and eye co-ordination, balance and rebuilding muscle. Ty had an incredible fitness level which played a huge part in how quickly he has recovered but almost two months in hospital takes its toll.

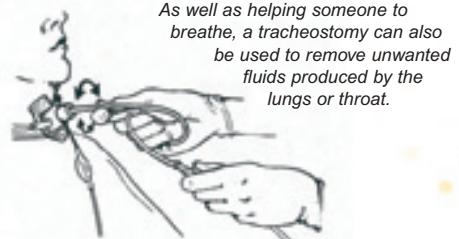
"I'm already improving," says Ty. "After each gym session I notice something extra that I can do. In hospital I lost one-and-a-half stone so I need to build on that, I also had to learn to walk again. It's funny, when I was starting to walk my feet would be pointing in – I have to look at them and tell myself to point them forward. The strange thing is that I can be lying in bed and because I don't hurt anywhere I can forget that I am broken, if you see what I mean. I'm not

DBR DICTIONARY

A TRACHEWHATOMY?

A tracheostomy is a surgical procedure in which an opening is created in the front of the trachea (windpipe). A tracheostomy tube is inserted through the opening and into the trachea.

If a person's airway (the tube that connects the mouth and nose to the lungs) is blocked or unusable, the opening that is created during a tracheostomy allows them to breathe freely.



As well as helping someone to breathe, a tracheostomy can also be used to remove unwanted fluids produced by the lungs or throat.

struggling for motivation – I want to get back to where I was, I definitely want to get back on a motocross bike and try it. But then I don't ever want to stay in hospital that long again!"

The support from the motocross community has been immense with donations, collections, a website being set up and hundreds of well-wishers from all over the world.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has helped in any shape or form," says Ty. "There are just too many to list – people with the money, with the website, Goldenstones, Russ, people who looked after Todd [Ty's brother], people that we just can't thank enough. There are also the people that we don't know like the nurse and riders who helped me on the beach, the hospital, the police, ambulance and first aiders...honestly, I could fill the mag!"

As for motivation for the long hours of gym work and rehabilitation that lie ahead of this amazing fella he doesn't beat around the bush. "Well I want to be in Weston next year," he grins. "If I can get in then that would be sweet!"

- If you're on the look-out for a personal trainer contact Russ on **07841 627374** or through Goldenstones on **01935 845880**.



Emphasis is on hand/eye co-ordination, balance and rebuilding muscle

TY FIGHTER!



Ty's aiming to get back in the saddle as soon as possible

bike test

Walker gives it a spot of
Jason Crump-stylee on
Suzuki's new RMX450Z



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SUZUKI HAVE TAKEN AN AWESOME MOTOCROSSER – THE RM-Z450 – AND TURNED IT INTO AN AWESOME ENDURO MACHINE. INTRODUCING THE RMX450Z...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by rayarcher.com





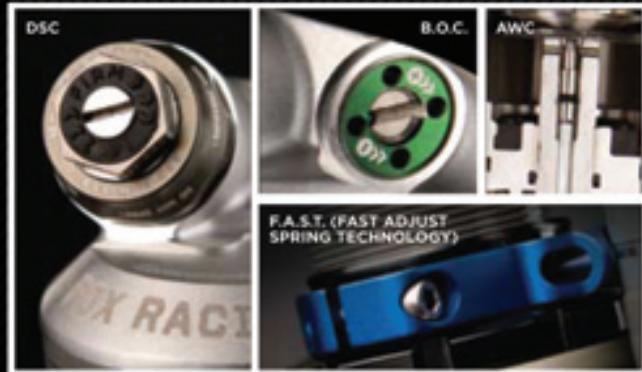
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CONVERGE



bike test

You'll be more conscious of its weight on slow stuff but that's the same with all 450cc machines

Can it really be done? A Japanese enduro bike 'based' on a motocross model that comes as a package that's pretty much ready to go racing without major part removal for lightening and raceability? Can Suzuki take the RM-Z450 MX bike and tweek it enough for hardcore off-road racing and riding without ruining the essence of a great chassis and motor package? Can they really make the RM-Z450 the real deal?

If first impressions are anything to go by then the answer to these questions seems to be a resounding yes! The bike brought in to appeal to the masses and, at last, offer an alternative to the legendary DR-Z400 trail bike gave me a little buzz in the trouser department when I first laid eyes upon it at the NEC Show. And Walker's weapon started to twitch again upon arrival at the off-road oasis that is Wheeldon Farm off-road facility in Devon. What a beauty...

Now Suzuki have gone for it with this bike

and although it's not going to win prizes for being a lot lighter than the other Jap bikes out there it is in the right area with a kerb weight of 123.5kg being pretty much the same as the WR450 and around six pounds lighter than the KLX450. The makers of the yellow perils set out to make the RM-Z450 into a bike which is easy to ride fast AND slow as this is important to every off-roader. Plus they have kept the bike super slim which is always a bonus in the woods.

When you first sit on the bike it really does feel exactly the same as the MX bike – slim and ready to be chucked around. Bar bend is perfect for the bike and as you would expect on any modern bike the controls feel ergonomically pleasing. The clutch pull is a little heavy at first but the front Nissin brake is simply superb with the usual positive feel and the throttle has a light positive feeling. The cockpit is neat and simple with a digital display and the slick front headlight smoothly blending into the bike's scheme of

smooth lines and uncluttered looks. Seating position is comfortable with pegs to seat to bar all complimenting each other so well that the bike seems to blend and fit to you when sitting still.

The only initial standout negatives with the bike on first impression are the dated speedo cable winding up from the front wheel – no need – and the sidestand which kind of hangs around in the middle of nowhere and will catch feet and boot parts out on the track.

On the technical side the engineers at Suzuki have given the motor a gearbox to cope with all situations with a low-speed first and second moving to a solid third gear and onto the wide ratio – compared to the MX bike – fourth and fifth gears. On the top end the cams use a different profile to give the bike linear power delivery to help keep things smooth as the ponies pump out and this is also aided by the lower compression piston. Keihin take care of >>

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Pondo takes the Suzuki for a dip

the fuel injection and Suzuki seem to have cracked it in the production department with their development of the easily tuned system over the past couple of years.

Last but by no means least of the main RMX motor developments is, of course, the electric start. This is not a bolt-on part to the MX motor, this is a specifically designed and incorporated system on the RMX engine.

The chassis runs the angles of the MX bike and the Showa suspension units are re-worked to deliver a softer action to suit the target terrain of the new bike. This chassis works well on the MX bike with an agile package so it is simply begging to be ridden hard in the woods (does that sound wrong?)...

So to the track! The first wheels to turn were on the indoor track at Wheeldon and the laps pounded out on the superb and technical circuit served well as an appetiser for the day's riding as it offered a warm-up for bike and rider. The bike instantly started to show its easy-to-ride characteristics and the power delivery was bringing a smile to my face.

I did find the rear of the bike a little soft and out of balance from the fantastic feeling forks. I had the same feeling on the RM-Z launch a couple of months ago so I was expecting the same low rider feeling with the RMX. This would be easily fixed but it is a balance issue rather than a weight of rider issue. A slightly harder set-up in the rear would bring the balance back into sync.

After the indoor session it was onto the cross country track. What a track to test a bike on! A perfect blend of terrain and undulation to test every aspect of the RMX – tight technical woods, fast woods, technical descents, open going, rocks, roots, mud, streams, ruts, mud, mud, mud. What a place!

The bike takes all these challenges and deals with them with a smoothness not seen since Sutty's dating days of his youth! The RMX takes every situation in its stride and really excels when the going gets mid to high speed in loamy conditions in the woods. This thing loves to be ripped through fast grippy wood sections and really turns into the bike it is designed to be.

The flip side is that this is a 450 and with that comes a bit of a weighty feeling when the going gets slow and slippery. That is a trait of all bikes in this class so it is not a negative of the Suzuki, it is a fact of weight versus grip and manoeuvrability.

When I say this bike is easy to ride, please do not take my words lightly – I really do mean it is easy. Even in completely stock form this bike makes life a blast and has every situation more than covered which allows maximum attack. This bike will make you faster in sections of track with its ease of ride and superbly sharp feeling chassis.

SECOND OPINION

PONDO'S PIECE >>

I found the RMX an absolute belter of a bike. Riding after Geoff, conditions were testing for the, ahem, less able rider – the wood sections especially where deep mulch meant the front wheel paid scant attention to handlebar input. As a result I spent a lot of time swearing at a stalled engine or on my ear wondering what had gone wrong but the bike always started with ease, even when it hadn't had time to recover from the previous amp-draining onslaught.

A little dispirited and a lot exhausted, I sat back for a breather as Tom Sagar put on a demonstration – where I'd been struggling, sitting down with legs flailing like nunchucks, Tom looked like he was riding a different surface, up on the pegs and flat-out. Make no mistake, less horsepower than the RM-Z450 does not make this a slow bike – the tractable power means the enduro version makes up five yards out of a slick corner and the extra MX power is only going to claw one or two of them back before the next turn...

On easier terrain it was much easier to see the whole package – the fuel-injected motor makes strong

power from tickover and is incredibly user-friendly. There are no steps, just a creamy wave of drive that's gloriously accessible so that even a novice like me could give third-gear feet-up power slides a go and you could slide it into soggy berms, use your inside foot for balance and give it big handfuls for that MXGP effect. Away from the terrifying forest mulch it felt wonderfully balanced and gave plenty of notice of any wayward behaviour.

The bike was comfy, feels quite narrow and the slightly softer suspension was well suited to me, although a faster rider will be able to alter to suit. Reliability was put to the test by another journo who submerged an RMX in a river-crossing – it took some lifting from various angles to drain the water then turn the motor over to blow the chamber clear. It took a while for the starter to do its trick and the bike was blowing steam out of the exhaust for a long while afterwards but the battery never faltered and the bike was none the worse for the experience. Awesome kit!

Paul Harris



SPECIFICATIONS

RMX450Z >>

Capacity: 449cc

Bore and stroke: 96mm X 62.1mm

Transmission: Five-speed

Fuel capacity: 6.2 litres

Front suspension: Showa 47mm
(310mm travel)

Rear suspension: Showa

(310mm travel)

Wheelbase: 1485mm

Ground clearance: 320mm

Seat height: 950mm

Kerb weight: 123.5kg

Shaun slams the factory KTM over a log at FatCat's extreme enduro course





Top-flight, low-key – Dougie and Shaun don't need to massage their egos with the trappings of off-road fame

BROTHERS IN ARMS!

WITH THE SAME SPONSOR AND THE SAME MANAGEMENT COMPANY IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE DOUGIE LAMPKIN AND SHAUN SIMPSON MET UP FOR A DAY OF PLAYING IN THE DIRT...

Photos by rayarcher.com

One is a trials legend and the other is a potential MX world champion. Both are Red Bull athletes and after having met each other for the first time midway through last year Dougie Lampkin and Shaun Simpson developed an immediate and mutual respect for each other. With the serious stuff over for another season – and with both riders relatively fit following their respective injuries – they took the opportunity to go riding together and share a day enjoying and appreciating each other's differing skills.

Mentioning Dougie Lampkin and Shaun Simpson in the same sentence may seem a strange occurrence even to the most avid off-road fans. But while their personal and professional situations vary greatly these two great British

riders actually have much more in common than you would first realise. Lampkin at 33 years old and with 12 world trials titles to his name is in the twilight of his career while Simpson, at just 21 and with only one domestic national title under his belt, has yet to reach his true potential. So just how have these two become motorcycling mates?

For the last 11 years Dougie has benefited from the management services of G2F, a small specialised company that sits firmly within the off-road community and which has also looked after the likes of Paul Edmondson and Gordon Crockard. Back in May 2008 at the British MXGP, G2F's founder Jake Miller was present at a press conference where a young Simpson impressed the world's media with >>

his mature performance despite being thrust into what could have been a daunting spotlight. A few weeks later after a meeting with Shaun and his father Willie at a service station on the M40, Simpson was the latest talent to be brought under the G2F umbrella.

"We're always on the look-out for riders but while many are good on a bike so many are lacking in all the other departments that will ultimately determine the length and depth of their career," reckons Jake. "We have been spoilt with Dougie as he has been the absolute professional, not only in terms of the titles he has won but also the way he has been with his sponsors, his fans and the media."

"Although we were aware of Shaun's results on the track we had no prior knowledge of him on a personal level until we saw him at Mallory back in 2008. Immediately it was obvious that Shaun had a great relationship with the press and looked like he had an overall package we could really work with. Although Dougie and Shaun are so different in a lot of respects both have good core values and have fathers who really helped them make their way in life."

So a year later and back at Mallory Park, Simpson this time was a frustrated spectator at the MXGP having seen his season brought to a premature end as a result of a freak practice accident that had left the KTM factory rider with a badly broken leg. Lampkin on the other hand

was an excited visitor to the Leicestershire circuit with his four-year-old son, Alfie, both being keen motocross fans and making the most of a brief break in Dougie's hectic trials schedule. Within the comfort of Red Bull's impressive Energy Station hospitality Shaun and Dougie met each other for the first time and enjoyed an extended chat as each warmed to the common and grounded words that were shared despite their elevated status within the sport.

Dougie was instantly impressed. "I have met a lot of different riders from all sorts of motorcycle sports during my career. Most are okay but some have an inflated impression of themselves. Shaun was at the opposite end of the spectrum, he was so down to earth and just such a nice guy. We got on really well immediately and agreed that we should arrange to go riding together later in the year."

Shaun's initial experience was a similar one. "Although I have never actually followed trials that closely I was obviously aware of Dougie and of his incredible achievements. I don't know what I was expecting but I could not get over just how normal Dougie was. It was hard to imagine just what a legend he is as he was so low key and was so interested in what I was up to. I was a bit embarrassed to tell him about my trials riding but we did agree that we should get together once I was back on bike again."

Ironically, just as Shaun was getting back to

fitness later in the year Dougie was to suffer an injury of his own with the experienced campaigner enduring a nasty break to his left wrist as he made a rare appearance at a British championship trial in early August. Having received the news about Shaun's accident earlier in the season, this was a phone call Miller was not pleased to receive.

"When Shaun broke his leg back in April we actually got a call from a third party asking us to confirm Shaun's condition before we even knew anything about the accident. Incredibly, Shaun was actually in the ambulance when we got hold of Willie to find out what had happened but already the story was all over the internet."

"It was a terrible feeling as we have been so lucky with Dougie as he has been pretty much injury free over the last 10 years. I remember being sat at my desk feeling totally numb. Strangely, we were stood on the roof of the Red Bull Energy Station with Shaun at Lommel watching the MXGP when we got the call telling us Dougie was on the way to hospital with a suspected broken wrist. Both riders being injured in one year was just plain bad luck so we hope 2010 will be an injury free season for the two of them."

Fast-forward and winter is upon us, the weather forecast is not good but nothing is going to stop Dougie and Shaun meeting up to 'play' bikes at FatCat Moto Parc near Doncaster.



Dougie gets some turning tips from the GP motocrosser





The tone for the day is set early as the riders arrive in their respective self-driven vans with a noticeable lack of any kind of entourage. Lampkin is near to tears (of laughter) when he learns that Shaun and his younger brother/race mechanic Stefan have spent the night on airbeds in the back of the Factory Sprinter. What makes the situation even more amusing is that the airbeds were purchased en route from Belgium for less than 20 Euros – plus the fact that it happens to be Stefan's birthday.

The banter continues as Shaun and Dougie get kitted up and head straight for the extreme enduro course. Lampkin is a regular around the obstacle-strewn track and puts in a couple of sighting laps to give Simpson a feel for the challenge that lies ahead. The 2008 MX2 British MX champ is only a spectator for a few minutes longer before he can resist the temptation no longer. Dougie is interested to see how Shaun fares and pulls up on an elevated vantage point before removing his goggles. Simpson is no slouch and despite his lack of experience on this type of technical terrain he is soon setting a pace that even impresses the trials champion who is now a regular extreme enduro rider.

Lampkin is quick with his praise. "It's not easy out there, far from it. A lot of motocross riders would struggle even to get round, let alone lap at the speed Shaun is going already. I know he plays on his trials bike quite a bit and that definitely shows, his technique over the tyres and logs is good and his speed on the other parts is unbelievable. Watching him jump and corner is a real eye-opener and something I can definitely learn from. Schedules allowing, hopefully we can do this again later in the year."

Equally, Shaun is in awe of his fellow Red Bull athlete as Dougie picks his way over an array of trials obstacles that line the edge of the enduro course. "Dougie's bike control is just superb, the way he is using the throttle so delicately is a joy to watch. He is a big guy but he looks so graceful when riding it like a trials bike. We are not here to race each other or to prove who is best, it is just a case of having some fun and appreciating the different talents that we both have. It's a day I am proud to be part of and one that I hope we can repeat in the future."

As a bystander the occasion is both unique and special. Two great British riders, two great ambassadors, not an ego in sight and more mutual respect than seems possible. Let's hope 2010 brings the rewards that this duo richly deserve...

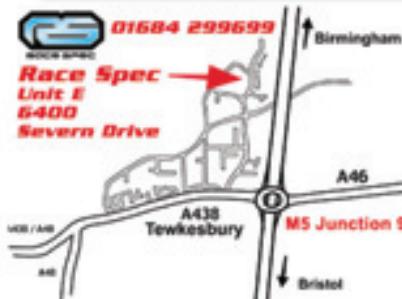


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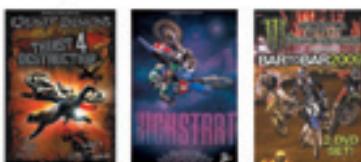
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K.W. DARRYL KING - 11th
IN HIS FIRST EVER GP MOTO --
FIGHTS WITH FRENCHMAN
PATRICK FURA AT
SAINDRES



BRAVO BEPPE!

KTM'S FIRST EVER 125cc MX GP WINNER, GIUSEPPE ANDREANI IS NOW BEST KNOWN FOR HIS WSB SUSPENSION COMPANY – BUT THAT COULD ALL BE ABOUT TO CHANGE WITH HIS RETURN TO THE MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

The crossover between the dirt world and road racing is surprisingly commonplace. And often simply a surprise!

At a WSB round last September a vaguely familiar figure strolled into the Kawasaki hospitality suite. Boyish, floppy dark hair flecked with grey, quietly spoken and American. Minutes passed before the penny dropped – Bob Moore, 1994 world 125 MX champion and now a riders' agent! And another former MX GP star and rival of Moore's who helped develop the 125 Katooms that first sprang Bob to fame is prominent in the WSB paddock too...

A tall, stooping, amiable Italian, his high-profile suspension company looks after several big teams including the Hannspree Honda squad of former schoolboy MX champion Jonathan Rea. Chirpy 22-year-old Ulsterman Rea – still a very fast, frequent motocross rider – was wide-eyed with astonishment when I told him of Giuseppe Andreani's achievements. Because this modest man himself shuns such



JOHN VAN DEN BERK (44)
JRODNEY SMITH DISPUTED
THE LEAD FOR 10 LAPS —
THEN ANDREANI PUNCHED!
SECOND MOTO, 1986
FRENCH 250 GP



'publicity' and prefers to get on with his job of sorting out superbike suspension!

Craggy Andreani – who looks as ancient now as he did in his final GP-winning season 21 summers ago – burst on to the 125 MX GP scene in 1981. Austrian 'Siggi' Lerner had been working hard on KTM's disc-valve 125 since himself finishing fourth in the 1978 series on an early version. Andreani, a late GP starter at 23, was hired alongside fellow Italian Mauro Miele and what an impact they made on the opening round of '81 at Lovola in Italy.

There 'Beppe' Andreani stormed to a first race win ahead of Michele Rinaldi and Akira Watanabe with Miele fifth. Miele repeated this result in race two with Andreani chasing him home to claim third overall behind future champ Rinaldi and ex-champ Watanabe! Crap in sand (like most Italians of yore!), they scored nothing in the Netherlands before Andreani claimed third in the first Austrian moto ahead of reigning champ Harry Everts.

Goldbach in Germany was the scene for round four and there, to Lerner's joy, Beppe Andreani sailed to KTM's first ever 125 GP victory – his double race win obliterating a three-way tie for second involving Everts, Rinaldi and Eric Geboers! It would be eight years before Trampas Parker landed KTM's first 125 world title but given their subsequent success in 125 and MX2 GPs (they have claimed six out of the last 10 world titles and are on a hat-trick in 2010) that day sealed Andreani's place in the pantheon of MX folklore. And although he missed three rounds mid-season he still finished sixth and best rookie in the series.

Beppe slumped to 11th in 1982, improved to eighth – just behind Jacky Vimond – in '83, then switched to Aprilia. This busy little Italian manufacturer had been contesting the 125 world championship for eight years but had never won a grand prix. And remarkably Giuseppe Andreani racked up their first-ever GP triumph at Launsdorf, Austria, in the fourth round! Third in the San Marino GP, he ended the year a career-best fifth in the table as Rinaldi was crowned Italy's first world MX champion. Back to 11th again in 1985, Andreani nonetheless won for Aprilia in San Marino, nicking the verdict with a scorching second race defeat of champion elect Pekka Vehkonen. Those two wins remain Aprilia's only MX GP successes.

After a less successful '86, Beppe moved his lanky frame up into 250 GPs where – on a Yamaha – a couple of top five finishes helped him to 12th overall. Then, ironically, in what would prove his final fling, Beppe was signed up by Dutchman Henk Thuis – founder of White >>

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...



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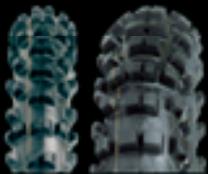


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Power suspension – to ride his notoriously swift private CR250 in 1988 with backing from Honda Italy.

The opening GP of the year featured the fast, sweeping, stony circuit of Rousson Salindres, deep down in the French Riviera just north west of Avignon and Beaucaire. The Moto-Club Salindrois was only 15 years old and, after organising several French national championship rounds, proud to be promoting its first grand prix.

The host club welcomed a pretty fabulous cast of characters, too. Michele Rinaldi – recently retired and, at 29, father of a baby girl – had signed ex-pat American Rodney Elwood Smith for his fledgling Chesterfield Suzuki squad. Michele had been impressed with Smith when Rodney beat the 250 GP regulars (including himself) in the 1987 Argentinian GP. Engineers

HAPPY 1988 FRENCH 250 GP WINNER JEM WHATLEY WITH THE ENORMOUS SPOILS OF VICTORY!



from Suzuki Japan swarmed around the new team, leaving Heron Suzuki's Jem Whatley and his new wrench Ian Browne to their own devices!

Reigning 125 world champ John van den Berk was at Yamaha and Italian factory Cagiva fielded 1987 250 vice-champion Vehkonen alongside Gert-Jan van Doorn and the previous year's number three Jorgen Nilsson. A whopping 78 – yes, 78! – entries had to be reduced to 40 starters via two timed sessions on an unkindly wet and cold Saturday. Smith and Frenchman Patrick Fura (Honda) topped the times but high-profile casualties included Mark Bennett, Michele Fanton, Marc Velkeneers and American Ricky Ryan while dark horses Andreani and Whatley slipped through sixth and 11th in group B.

With the weather still far from Mediterranean it at least blew dry on race day, leaving the beautiful track in prime condition. Impish Englishman Whatley – 25 going on 15 – cleanly aced the start of race one and was never headed, riding with fluent accuracy to fend off close challengers van Doorn, Yannig Kervella and van den Berk. Unlucky van Doorn's Cagiva expired in a cloud of blue smoke three laps from home by which time the rocky circuit had claimed numerous victims including Andreani. Right beside Whatley, Beppe wheeled violently off the gate, reached ninth place by half-distance ahead of Swedes Nilsson and Peter Johansson, then suffered a rear puncture.

Smith and Vehkonen both crashed early on but the American emerged for a cracking race two with van den Berk, Whatley, Andreani and van Doorn. Andreani forced the factory stars aside at two-thirds distance and repelled their repeated assaults in a really stirring contest as van Doorn, on the charge, took a stone in the eye and slowed dramatically allowing Whatley back through into fourth and overall grand prix glory!

Up ahead Beppe Andreani eventually crossed the line standing tall on the pegs – left



'BEPPE' ANDREANI (IMP HONDA) SCYLED TO SENSATIONAL SECOND RACE WIN IN SALINDRES

arm aloft – to win by three seconds from his fancied younger rivals as Henk Thuis danced with delight trackside!

Top 10 finishes, including a fifth in Czechoslovakia, became Beppe's regular fare until the 250 GP circus returned once more to Salta in Argentina for the penultimate round of the series. There he blew away title challengers van den Berk and Vehkonen, following up a first race fourth with another resounding second moto victory to take his first – and only – 250 GP win.

Ending the season 12th – level on points with Nilsson – this quiet Italian slipped into retirement and the development of his suspension business. Now his huge mobile workshops are a major presence in the WSB paddock.

Last October, though, Beppe admitted to me that "motocross is beginning to interest me again". And in November the news broke that Ohlins would join forces for 2010 with Andreani's old friend Michele Rinaldi and the Monster Energy Yamaha GP team. So those immaculate 'Andreani Ohlins' trucks will now adorn the sport Giuseppe once graced with such occasionally spectacular effect as a rider!

WHATLEY WINS 1988 FRENCH 250 GP, COOL & SMOOTH ON HERON SUZUKI





WASHED UP?

WITH NO MOTOCROSS DEAL ON THE TABLE FOR 2010 IS IT THE END OF THE LINE FOR GORDON CROCKARD? NOT AT ALL! HE'S SIMPLY GOING TO REINVENT HIMSELF AS A WEC RIDER AND MX SCHOOL OPERATOR...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Sutty



Motocross can be a cruel mistress. To get to the top – and stay there – takes skill, determination and dedication but even riders blessed with these three attributes, plus a bunch more qualities, can find themselves going from contender one season to off the radar the next.

One man who knows this all too well is three-time British champion Gordon Crockard. The 31-year-old spent most of a frustrating 2008 season taking on the US GNCC series before returning to post podium finishes at the final two Maxxis rounds of the year. Then in the first MX1 moto of the '09 Hawkstone International he crashed hard on the start straight and just a few seconds into the new season it was effectively game over for Gordy...

Gordon nearly died that day. He broke his collarbone, four ribs and four vertebrae and his spleen – in the words of the surgeon who saved his life – had exploded like 'a pot of jam'. By the time they got him on the operating table he had five litres of blood in his stomach. Thankfully he pulled through but his injuries looked certainly to be season-ending if not career-ending.

Amazingly, he was back in action by the halfway point of the British championship. Okay, he wasn't firing on all cylinders but he was still showing flashes of the Crock Star and by November's opening round of the Future West British SX championship he was beatable only by seasoned American indoor ace Mike Brown.

So far so good – except for 2010 Gordy hasn't got a motocross deal. Nothing. Not even a bikes and bits agreement. As far as MX teams go his career's flown into the Bermuda Triangle and off the radar. So instead he's setting his sights on the WEC and running a series of pre-season MX training schools in Spain. We caught up with him just before Christmas to find out what's the craic with the Crock...

profile

Gordy rips it up at the
NEC SX on his new
PBM Kawasaki





GC spent the best part of a troubled '08 season racing the US GNCC series



Barely months after his Hawkstone horror crash he was back in action



DBR: Last year was tough and this year has been even tougher – where does your motivation to keep on racing come from?

GC: "To have fun and be happy is always my primary goal. After that it is to take on a challenge and to do yourself proud. Winning races and championships is an amazing feeling and I know I will be a long time retired once I stop racing so while I have the chance to experience glory I will be taking it. I find it easy too. I know what to do to be successful. It's just a matter of wanting to do it and applying myself."

DBR: What are the negatives – and the positives – that have come out of your crash at Hawkstone at the start of the year?

GC: "Negatives for sure would be the physical differences that I have to now live the rest of my life with. Not having my spleen makes any illness a more serious matter and I have to respect that fact. I have experienced the top end of the dangers involved in the start of a motocross race and now being aware of how that feels it enters my head from time to time which is not a good thing to think about. Positives? I respect myself more. I take care of myself more."

DBR: How does it feel not to be offered a motocross deal for 2010? And do you think it's just as much a reflection of the current economic climate as your 2009 season?

GC: "I feel nobody believes in me and that I'm seen as finished. It makes me feel old and washed up. Sure the recession has tightened everyone's belts and money is the last thing anybody wants to spend. I don't command a lot of money to be spent though. It's not like I have stated to the world that I won't get out of bed for less than 20 grand. I mean – not one single offer! Not an offer for a bike or bikes. I'm sure many other riders are in the same boat. They must be.

"This new era of riders paying for their rides has slashed the dung out of the riders' value. Riders will now get daddy to pay for them to ride on a team. Team managers are welcoming this and trying to avoid the history of teams paying the rider. Throughout my career I have seen the sport change, the fresh new kids don't know it to be any different than what it is now so they will just take it as it is today. I sadly have been in it while it was still very rewarding for the rider – 10 years ago not having a team was no big stress. If you were fast enough to qualify at a GP then you could live off the qualifying money and prize money alone. All that is gone."

DBR: If you had got an MX deal do you think you've still got what it takes to re-establish yourself at the front of the British championship? And would this depend on what equipment you were offered?

GC: "I came back from my injury to race the remainder of the 2009 MX season for the reason being that it will help get me over a few gremlins and to rebuild myself ready to go into 2010 with another shot at what I had set out to achieve in 2009 before I got wrecked. I wanted to challenge for another British title.

"My main goal was to be able to stretch being British champion over a 10-year period – 2000 was the first time I won the title and I would have loved to go out and win it 10 years later in 2010. I know how to do it but, like I said, I just need to want to do it. So yeah, I do believe I still have what it takes. No problem."

"The equipment is very important. But it isn't the deciding factor on winning and losing. More so it determines how difficult a job the rider will have on his hands."

DBR: How much of a personal challenge is racing in the WEC? And is it something you really want to do or simply a way of continuing to make a 'living' out of racing motorcycles and extending your career?

GC: "I have always thought that I have the ingredients to be an excellent enduro rider. I can see that I will never get to the top of world MX again. The highest level I will get to would be British MX champion. I've done that three times already and also I am very aware of what amount of financial reward comes with it."



Passing former team-mate Ashley Greedy in Birmingham



Whereas with enduro I do have the chance to go as far as my ability will let me. That could be to the very top. And I know that the financial reward for being at the top of world enduro is very, very good.

"So as a businessman I would say that the sport to invest my energy and time into would be the one that I have the chance at reaching the top of and gaining the rewards for that investment. Business head says enduro. The other attractive point is that the racing dangers are less in enduro. No starts. No racing accidents or pile-ups. No landing on or crashing into fallen riders. I think it is safer. It's not very often that you hear of somebody being out for a season with injury. I guess you can make it as dangerous as you like, depending on how close to the limit you ride on the special tests."

"I like the way it is being promoted and becoming more orientated towards spectators. My love is motocross and I can still feed that passion while doing enduro if I go down the enduro route."

DBR: How did the Paul Bird deal come about?

GC: "I have had a good relationship with John Hellam who promotes the Future West SX series and also ran the Indoor Enduro World Cup at Sheffield. He asked me would I ride the indoor enduro and I said yeah. My results got Kawasaki interested in me riding for them at enduros as their rider David Knight was leaving to go to KTM. Initially Kawasaki asked me to do the British Enduro Championship and I said 'no, I want to do the WEC' and they said 'the only way you could do that is through Paul Bird Motorsport'. So we had a meeting and Paul asked what was I up to? What was I riding? Would I ride a Kawasaki? So I spoke to Paul Rowlands at PAR and got released. So we have done a deal to do the British SX championship and are looking at contesting the WEC and other select events in 2010."

DBR: What are your realistic goals in enduro over the next three seasons?

GC: "Well, I would want to progress into the top

five by year two and the top three by year three. I have no idea where my current level of skill and experience would place me in a WEC round. So it is tough to know what to expect in year one."

DBR: Will you race the BEC and cross country events as well?

GC: "I will contest any event that I end up contracted to or any event that I think would benefit my development as a WEC rider. One-off extreme events appeal to me as well but the priority will be to mould myself into the best WEC rider I can be."

DBR: Will we see you racing any high level MX events in 2010?

GC: "Definitely. I love racing motocross."

DBR: Tell us about your new venture in Spain...

GC: "Crockard Motocross Spain is a new business that I have set up and will be running camps in January, February and March 2010. The product will provide off-road riders the chance to ride quality dry motocross tracks during the wet British winter. I have a four star hotel and spa on board and all guests of my camps will stay there or the teams and riders who wish to drive there in their own trucks or campers can stay at a holiday home resort that has hook-up pitches for overnight stays. I have exclusive deals arranged with private tracks for sole use by the riders on my camps. Watering and track maintenance being part of the deal."

"Three levels of camp are on offer. Gold is where I take your bike out to Spain for you and you fly to Murcia where I will collect you and chauffeur you each day from hotel to track. Meals are included at the hotel and gym usage too. Silver is you drive your own bike there in your own van and stay in the hotel and attend camp each day. Bronze will be for those who want to drive and sleep in their own campers."

"Each camp will run for 2 weeks at a time. Anyone who wants more details should go to www.crockstar.co.uk or email me at gcrockard@yahoo.com"



GORDY'S GOER!

IT'S A MEAN, GREEN, RACE-WINNING MACHINE – GORDON CROCKARD'S KX250-ENGINEED, KXF250-FRAMED PAUL BIRD RACING KAWASAKI...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Sutty

Here at DBR tech HQ we do like it when a bike which is, shall we say, cool as f**k comes along. It just so happens that one particular vehicle gracing the first round of the British SX champs at Birmingham's NEC with, as it also happens, Mr Gordon Crockard upon it was this stunning KX250 two-stroke-engined, KXF250-chassied weapon.

This very special stroker – courtesy of Paul Bird's Kawasaki WSB team and their off-road technician Leo Cordingley – is an absolute beauty. And with the two-strokes refusing to go down without a fight it's an absolute blast to see this bike delivering the ponies onto the dirt and making a sweet sound which doesn't cause permanent hearing damage!

I first heard about this bike during a conversation with David Knight who was getting a bit excited about this super-trick 250cc

two-stroke he was looking at running in the indoor enduros. Unfortunately, the bike wasn't to make it to the Sheffield IEWC round under the big Manxman but with a little more testing and modification the bike you see arrived pretty much ready to rip at the NEC.

This bike is fully loaded with trickness and some good engineering has gone into the mix to get it close to perfect.

Gordy's goer is a blend of parts and handy work which have come together to make a solid and extremely desirable off-road bike. Service – the hybrid bike specialists from America – supply the modified KXF frame for the build which makes starting the project a possibility. Then there's the need for a KX250 two-stroke motor and various other parts from a blend of KXF250 and 450cc models as well as after-market trickness to personalise it for the Crock Star

The frame modifications include the moving

of engine mounts and a superb alloy block head-stay to keep the vibrations down and the chassis performing with sharpness. After a chat with Leo it seems the bike build came together pretty easily with just a few special mods needed to make it a contender. One of the main mods over the Service recommended set-up is the use of the KX250 complete air intake system including the cage assembly which has been fitted to a hand-cut carbon-fibre spacing plate and sealed and riveted into place on the modified KXF250 airbox. This allows the KX250 airboot to be used making everything easier to work with and allowing better airflow into the motor.

The bike is put together well and everything looks like it should be there. The ride of the bike according to Gordy is balanced and super-easy to turn. A point proved by the passing manoeuvres he was pulling on almost everyone on his way to some epic results at the SX!

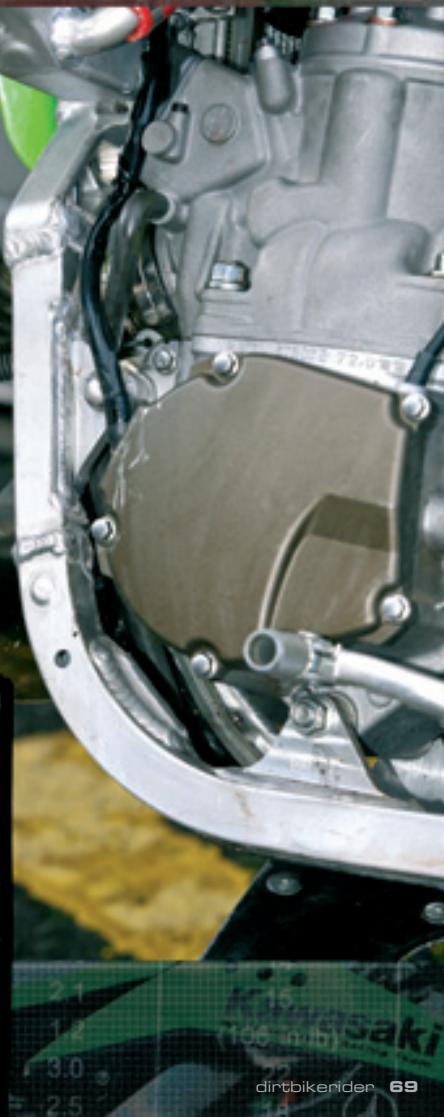


SHOPPING LIST

WHAT YOU'LL NEED >>

- KX250 two-stroke engine and carburettor
- KX250 two-stroke airbox intake rubber with modification and cage carrier assembly
- KX250 electrics
- KX250 throttle housing, cable and clutch lever
- Service modified KXF250 frame
- KXF250 subframe and airbox
- KXF250 swingarm and linkage
- KXF250 brakes, tank, plastics and Showa rear shock
- KXF250 footpegs
- KXF450 KYB front forks
- CR125 radiators.
- X Trig triple-clamps.
- Talon wheels with carbon hubs and black Excel A60 rims
- Renthal handlebars, half waffle soft grips and sprockets
- Tsubaki Chain
- Bridgestone 601 front and 602 rear tyres @ 12psi
- SFS Performance silicon hoses, modified to fit
- Twin Air Filter for 250 two-stroke
- Pro Circuit Exhaust system with R304 Shorty silencer plus modified brackets
- TM Designworks chainguide and slipper
- Motul lubricants

GC chills out between mega block-passes



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WRITE STUFF!

THIS MONTH OUR TIP-TOP TOP-TIP TECH TACKLES CLUTCH FREE PLAY, A CLUNKING KATOM AND A POPPING FOUR-POPPER – SKILLS GODFREY!

Words by Geoff Walker

FREE N'EASY!



Hey Geoff,

Happy New Year to you and the technical readers. I hope you can help me. I have had bikes for many years and I seem to get different advice when it comes to adjusting the amount of free play on my clutch at the lever. When I adjust it on my WR250 it seems to be inconsistent. Is there a sure-fire way to keep the adjustment good before each ride?

Graham, Ipswich

A very Happy New Year to you too! There is an easy way to find a consistent and true amount of lever free play on your WR clutch. First of all I will say that you really do need to change the engine oil on the WR every couple of rides as the quality of oil has a direct effect on the clutch of the little blue weapons as they tend to get hot under pressure. Use a good quality oil recommended by your Yamaha dealer.

Anyway, back to the adjustment. If the conditions are normal and you are not going to be abusing the clutch you can run it at around 3mm of free play and if the conditions are likely to get you hangin' on the clutch some more then give it around 5mm of free play. The way to check the play is to take hold of the cable's outer cover where it comes away from the lever and put a little bit of tension on it as though you are pulling it away from the lever. You then with the other hand pull the lever in slightly so the cable is being moved back and forward while you still keep the tension from the other side of the lever. You will feel and see the free movement at the lever and this will give you the true free play.

Spring Preload Adjusting Nut
Locknut
Hook Wrench
(Part No. 1101)

Using the hook wrench (a special tool), turn the spring preload adjusting nut as required. Turning clockwise increases the spring preload.

POP QUIZ!

Dear Geoff,

I hope you can help. I have a 2006 KXF 250 and it is a great bike. It has however started to play up a bit just lately as it seems to be popping quite a lot when I shut off the throttle. It has done this a little bit before but it seems to be getting much, much worse with every ride. Do you have any ideas please?

Ross, Worcester

Hey Ross, the problem sounds very much like a split header (front part of exhaust) pipe. This will screw up the back pressure required to make your engine run sweet and over time could cause a little bit of damage. If the header pipe is the stock unit on your bike it is made from titanium which is a bit of a nightmare to re-weld so you may well have to search the internet for a replacement unit if this is the problem.

Another possible cause could be to do with the hot start – if it is stuck on a little bit it will make the bike run lean but this would be all through the rev range rather than just when you shut off the throttle.

CLUNKING KATOM

Hello DBR,

I wonder if you can help me please? I am the very proud owner of a 2005 KTM 250 SX. I bought it a few weeks ago and I am going to do all sorts of riding and racing on it when I get myself in shape. The bike is not perfect as you would expect and I have found it to have a lot of movement in the rear swinging arm as it seems to be clunking when I take the bike off the stand. I am not sure exactly where the movement is but could you give me any idea please? I don't want to ride the bike if it is dangerous.

Richard, Nottingham

Is the rear of the upper rear shock absorber pivot point

Your problem sounds like a pretty common one on KTM's in general. It sounds like a problem with your lower PDS bearing which is the load bearing unit where your shock absorber connects to the swingarm.

This bearing takes a lot of punishment over time due to hard work and washing of the bike etc. The unit basically fails and breaks up inside causing movement and your 'clunking'. The only solution is to replace the part.

This is quite an easy task if you have a press or a good vice and some large sockets. If you don't have the equipment to replace this kind of part then take the swingarm or bike to your local dealer and get them to press the old bearing out and the new one in. If you think you can do it just whip the back wheel and chain off and remove the swingarm. You then have to take the outer sections of the bearing out and remove the seals. It is a matter of pressing the bearing out with the use of a large socket which fits around the fitting area of the bearing without obstructing the bearing as it presses out. Use a smaller socket to do the pressing.

Clean the area and reverse the process to refit the PDS bearing, seals and outer sections. Do not use grease when you refit your shock bolt as this damages the PDS bearing.



WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

AWESOME ISO2 NUTRITION SWAG UP FOR GRABS >>

Got a prep problem? Is your stroker sickly? Your four-banger bust? Or are you simply a short-arste struggling to secure your steed on its stand? Well help is at hand in the form of our tip-top tech and his top tech tips! Email Geoff with your technical teasers at geoffwalkerdr@aol.com Each month Geoff will answer a selection of readers' letters and each month our favourite will win an awesome ISO2 Nutrition products package – worth over £60 – plus a drinks bottle and drinks mixer. Check out the full range of ISO2 Nutrition products at www.iso2nutrition.co.uk

It'd been a rough night for Jedward...

WINTER WARMERS!

COLD, DARK MORNINGS AND NIGHTS MAY NOT MAKE YOU WANT TO HIT THE GYM OR POUND THE PAVEMENT BUT NOW'S THE TIME TO LAY YOUR FITNESS FOUNDATIONS FOR THE SUMMER...

Words by Alan Milway

Deepest, darkest winter is upon us and while some are hiding away the keen and motivated are still to be found searching out rideable tracks and thoroughly enjoying the challenge.

Let's not forget that now is the time when next summer's champions will be decided. Simply put, the hours spent training, practising and bettering yourself now will be what decides performances when the sun is shining, the gear is clean and the spectators are watching. The unseen work makes the difference and that is one of the things that fascinates me about champions. We all see their good times but rarely see their hard times pounding out the miles or pushing themselves in the gym.

Winter training is often difficult. Winter weather and lack of daylight combine to rob us of motivation, provide us with excuses and allow us to justify procrastination. However, with a routine planned this will help us keep to the task in hand and focus on progression. This is where a training plan must be right and relevant. Putting hours into the wrong areas or doing the wrong things will leave you scratching your head come spring.

Here are some keys to winter training to see you through the dark months...

EASY DOES IT

This title is slightly misleading but vital to bear in mind. A lot of cardiovascular and endurance training is done at heart rate intensities that are actually too high to gain the best benefits. Research has shown that the bulk of endurance training should actually be done at heart rates below 80 per cent of the maximum. This is often felt to be 'too easy' and people stray into heart rates above this but not hard enough to really tax effort levels.

Don't worry if the intensity feels very manageable, don't guilt yourself into going too hard. Building a good base of endurance is vital and long, steady training sessions over the winter will set you up well for the spring.

The main keyword here is 'duration'. Essentially, the longer the training session, the better the results will be. Constructing a training plan that includes long, aerobic training sessions based around sports such as cycling, running, rowing or swimming will let the body evolve and develop endurance that will be the foundation to further training. Keep the training sessions fresh by mixing up the activities, listening to music while performing them or by trying to include them into daily life – such as riding or running to work.

This is often easier than first thought and many people realise it is very possible when it is suggested to them. It also means by the time you are back from work training is done too!

WORK ON YOUR STRENGTH NOW

Overlooked by some and too heavily focused on by others, strength training can work wonders but also cause problems. The facts make simple reading – the bigger the muscle, the more force it can exert. So if you lack strength, building muscle tissue is very beneficial.

However, just a quick mental head to toe of your motocross rider of choice will probably confirm that he is not built like a rugby player. Motocross riders do not require the level of pure strength of some sports and it

highlights one of the drawbacks to looking at strength training in isolation – building muscle mass does not have any effect on endurance capacity.

But used in conjunction with endurance-based training, strength training allows increased bike control, improved technique and an increase in bike-riding stamina. Look to build into the week a regular strength training session. This can be very basic and use little equipment – press-ups, chin-ups, squats, sit-ups etc all will make a great benefit to your performance but the exercises take up little time, space or equipment.

EAT LIKE A KING

Those in regular training actually have an increased immunity against infection and are at less risk of cold, flu or other winter ailments. However, when training levels increase and training is performed outside in the cold there is the potential to put your body under a lot of strain and also lower immunity.

Although an obvious statement, eating healthily and sensibly could mean the difference between sitting out for weeks on end or continuing to build and develop your training. Are you actually eating your five a day? I thought not. Are you cooking fresh food daily or relying on packets, snacks and sandwiches? Does your diet have a large focus on wholegrain carbohydrate - an athlete's key source of energy and something that is burned at levels greater than many anticipate? Review your diet with a simple mental daily menu. Stick to it and steer away from too much rubbish!

Some key vitamins and minerals to maintain health include the following...

- Vitamin C (oranges, grapefruits, berries and also peppers and tomatoes)
- Vitamin A (carrots, eggs and apricots)
- Zinc (meat and fish and seeds)
- Fatty acids (oily fish and nuts)

HAVE ONE SESSION OF PAIN A WEEK

Are you ever pushing yourself to your very limit? If the answer is only when you are on the motorbike then you need to think about adding one session that goes somewhere near to preparing your body for these weekend onslaughts.

I mentioned earlier the importance of steady training and this holds true for the bulk of training. However, one short, sharp session a week really makes sense. A circuit training session, a spin class, a boxing evening or likewise will get the heart beating at close to maximum levels and the levels reached during racing.

These sessions need not be long in duration and shouldn't be something to fear! Enjoying a short, sharp session is very possible and will make riding on a weekend feel that much more manageable.

So there you have it. Off-season training lays the ground work for the season and motivation at this time of year is key. Building foundations now will improve health, reduce the likelihood of injury and obviously make riding easier, performances better and you'll have more fun. Use these fundamentals to form the foundations to training. Keep it fun, keep it varied and you'll reap the rewards come spring... |



MEDICALMILWAY

Alan Milway is a qualified sports scientist who runs MX Fitness specialising in training motocross and enduro riders. For more information on how Alan can help you train go to his website www.mxfitness.co.uk or call him on 07810 827427

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MEASURING UP!

PROBABLY THE BIGGEST DEBATE IN WORLD MOTOCROSS IS WHO HAS THE FASTEST RIDERS, THE GPs OR THE AMA NATIONALS? WELL THANKS TO MIKE ALESSI'S PRE-SEASON PLANS WE COULD VERY WELL BE ABOUT TO GET AN ANSWER...

Words by Jenni Dick Photos by Steve Cox

Who has the best individual riders – the GPs or the AMA Nationals? The MX des Nations is a team event which throws up as many questions as it does answers, truly top-flight Americans haven't raced the GPs for years and when the leading GP men head Stateside it tends to be for a one-hit deal on alien tracks. It's a question that is virtually unanswerable – until now...

Mike Alessi's Euro-bound early this year and that offers up the mouth-watering prospect of one of the AMA's genuine top outdoors talents going head-to-head with the cream of the GP crop. So what can we expect from the #800 rider who has ditched this year's SX series in favour of prepping for the AMA Nationals by joining us in Euroland for the first three GPs of 2010?

It's no secret that the Alessi clan are one of the more outspoken groups in the racing world but having spent some time with them late in 2009 what's apparent is their total commitment to the job in hand. Mike is a workhorse that eats, sleeps and breathes motocross and it's no wonder that he has achieved phenomenal amounts at the age of 21 with the complete focus he puts into his work. On top of that each of Mike's small, hand-picked entourage are equally as focussed and committed on his main goal – to win his first AMA pro motocross championship.

After finishing second on so many occasions he's often had one hand on that elusive championship title but despite the challenging times he's faced when he's come up short since he turned pro in 2004 his fierce determination has never been dented.

Based mainly in Victorville, California, Mike has all the facilities needed to be a world class racer at his fingertips organised and prepared by his controversial dad, Tony. Alessi Snr takes a lot of stick for his over-enthusiastic, sometimes arrogant and 'typically American' OTT attitude but look behind the scenes and it's Tony who tries to make sure that the wheels stay on the wagon for Mike through thick and thin.

But Mike's 2009 certainly didn't go to plan and he saw his championship hopes go down the pan after battling to overcome a serious knee injury picked up in Pennsylvania. Sustained in practice, Mike cased the last jump of a quadruple causing him to slide off the track and smash

his knee hard into a fence post. After undergoing surgery the very next day that saw the #800 rider have wire and three screws put into his knee, the then AMA MX1 series leader battled to keep his championship hopes alive.

"This period was frustrating for me," admits Mike. "I started the season second but went to Hangtown then Texas where I won all the motos. I was hoping to go and win the championship but then I crashed and broke my knee in practice."

Just three weeks later – to the surprise of his fans and just about everyone in the Nationals paddock – Mike was gritting his teeth through the pain and back racing at Lakewood, Colorado. But disaster struck again when a coming together with another rider re-broke his knee, demolishing any of his championship chances.

"I had surgery and therapy and I knew it would be risky to come back and ride but I had to give it my all as I needed to do everything possible to keep the championship a possibility," says Mike. "Had I not got hurt at Colorado maybe I could have still gone and won but I crashed in the first moto and it was then a case of more surgery while taking the summer off to recover properly before an intense schedule to try and get some fitness back."

The 'Holeshot Kid' as he's known for his amazing ability to fire off the startline may have been down this year but he's >>



The 21-year-old set the early pace in the 450 class



profile

Mike's using the opening GPs to get into shape for the AMA Nationals

MIKE
MACHINING

certainly not out and his determination is more evident than ever for 2010 as he returns to KTM. Flicking through some pictures from early '09 his pupils dilate – "man, that red plate looks so good on my bike" – and you can see how hungry he already is, despite enduring agonising months of rehab to get himself back up to full fitness.

Post-surgery the plan was to head over to Australia for the supercross series combined with some UK indoor events but it just didn't quite go to schedule. While familiarising himself with the KTM, recovering from injury and training to reclaim the fitness he's lost it became obvious that time would run out for more racing in 2009 if he wanted to stay safe and be competitive. So it was back to the drawing board with the prep for 2010 and the new plan is to hit Europe in January, forget about the unforgiving world of supercross for a while and get his preparations properly under way for where Mike

has shown his best form previously – the outdoor AMA Nationals.

Over the last few months Mike's been at the family home in Florida training hard aboard his KTM 450. He's also been competing in a few low-key races to dial the bike in while building up his stamina for full-length motos ready for what the new year brings with his Jägermeister-backed KTM deal that's run directly from the Austrian firm's factory with support from KTM USA for the Stateside races. This programme – headed up by Pit Beirer – means much of the development testing will take place in Europe alongside the likes of world champions Antonio Cairoli and Marvin Musquin.

"It's great to be back with KTM as they're a great company," says Mike. "They have provided me with everything I need and I am really happy. I am not sure entirely about the testing plans but I'm definitely looking forward to riding with Tony. I think we have quite a good connection and he



Team Alessi have courted controversy



Alessi leads De Reuver at Desertmartin



GP PREQUEL!

ANOTHER BITE AT THE CHERRY >>

When Mike Alessi rolls up to the startgate at Sevlievo in Bulgaria on April 4 it will mark his GP debut in the MX1 division – but it won't be his first taste of world championship racing.

Back in 2005 Mike was very much the 'enfant terrible' of the AMA scene. After finishing runner-up in the Stateside 250F series behind Ivan Tedesco following a bad-tempered finale at Glen Helen that saw the new champ label him "an idiot", Alessi then travelled across the Atlantic to Desertmartin for the final round of the world championship.

Team Alessi's pre-race smack-talk had got a lot of backs up in the GP paddock and the 17-year-old had everyone gunning for him in Northern Ireland. Although he grabbed the lead first time out it was Marc De Reuver who proved to be the fastest, the Dutchman even turning around and gesturing for Mike to follow after sticking a pass on him.

Alessi finished the opening moto in third but his youth and inexperience showed in race two when, while coming through after an earlier crash, he tried to pass Billy MacKenzie around the outside of a fast left-hander and the Scot simply slammed him into the bank.

We know that his attitude's improved and can also be pretty sure that Mike will improve on that eighth overall in Bulgaria but has he got the speed to win GPs? That's a question we're going to have to wait until April to find out...

*"Man that red plate looks so good on my bike..."
And Alessi's focussed on getting it back...*

MC ASTIRINI



is an amazing rider so I am looking forward to learning from him. I'm sure it will be beneficial to be riding with those guys.

"I've tested the 350 along with many other of the bikes when I came over for the des Nations in October. I'm really happy to be working with KTM again and the bikes are great. I'm excited to be racing them next year."

It's also been well documented that Mike is planning to do as many pre-season international events as possible along with the first few GPs to get him up to full speed for the start of the Nationals on May 22. "I'm really excited to race such great events in Europe. My goal is to bring our package to the table and whatever we come out with I should be happy."

"Sure I want to do well at those races but it's more for me to prepare for the AMA Nationals. It's not solely about winning, it's to test, learn

about the bike, get the suspension and motor right and build my speed for the start of the outdoor season in America.

"Although it's part of our preparation programme I do think racing in Europe will be great. I think me racing over there will finally get people to see what the real speed of European riders is because they can base me off them and see."

So it will be interesting to see what the #800 will be able to achieve. He has already signed up for the Mantova Starcross with a few others currently being negotiated – including our very own Hawkstone Park International – where he can dip his toe into the water with the competition before taking on the first few GPs. But it won't be easy for the American as there are plenty of hungry MX1 racers that he'll be mixing it up with and a busy European schedule

in February and April will certainly be keeping him on his toes before he trips back over to the USA full-time in May.

Over Christmas Mike headed back with girlfriend Danielle and his family to California but he certainly wasn't kicking back like the rest of us as he still has some more fitness to gain before he begins racing.

"My fitness is about 80 per cent at the minute. Although my knee is now 100 per cent healed I still have some muscle to build around it and I'm working really hard over the winter to get that back. My main focus is for the fitness to be there for the Nationals but we're working really hard at it throughout the winter."

"I'm looking forward to training more – in the gym and cycling – but it will also be good spending the holidays with my family in California before we head over to Europe."

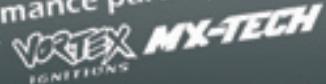
Ryno Hughes – gesturing for chasing riders to catch him – wasn't impressed by Team Alessi's claim Mike would beat Carmichael on his 450 debut

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2010 catalogue coming soon



The Nuclear Cowboyz have called up top riders including Jeremy 'Twitch' Stenberg and Nate 'The Destroyer' Adams



Mad Max meets Crusty Demons
meets Cirque Du Soleil ensures
Nuclear Cowboyz shows are a
great evening out



Racer X's editors at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene..

STATE SIDE OVERLOAD!

STEVE COX CHECKS OUT THE LATEST FREESTYLE THING TO

HIT THE STATES...

Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of

STATE SIDE



Blame it on Australia! Seriously! Remember '70s Aussie flick 'Mad Max'? It was the movie about a post-apocalyptic future society where keys to modern life – fuel, food, water etc – are scarce and the people have resorted to ripping around on relatively fuel-efficient dirt bikes and in buggies and other off-road vehicles. Except for one guy – Mad Max – who drives a supercharged 1973 Ford Falcon. And then there's the Crusty Demons of Dirt tour which is a freestyle show (not contest), also conceived in Australia.

Combine the two and then add in some Cirque du Soleil for 'culture' and you have the new Nuclear Cowboyz tour that Feld Motor Sports (the same company that promotes the AMA SX championship) is putting on to tour the entire United States in 2010.

Nuclear Cowboyz is not a contest, although it kind of is. It's a freestyle show set in a post-apocalyptic future place where two rival FMX gangs are fighting and when they fight they resolve their differences through freestyle (see, that's why it kind of is a contest).

The show is about two hours long and after seeing a pre-run at the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena it's pretty easy to recommend. The promoters said they were aware of the fact that the show was still a bit rusty and that it would get better over time but even so it seems like this is the type of thing that freestyle motocross was destined for.

Watching one guy put in his best run for points is pretty fun but watching different guys do the same tricks with varying degrees of 'execution' can get old after a while. But in Nuclear Cowboyz there are times when there are eight to 10 bikes in the air at the same time! No kidding. Nearly a dozen bikes in the air at once pulling off different tricks. It's controlled chaos. Sensory overload.

And it doesn't hurt that Feld went out and hired some of the very best in the business to star in a show such as this. On the bikes Nate Adams, Jeremy 'Twitch' Stenberg, Adam Jones, Mike Mason, Ronnie Faisst, Todd Potter, Beau Bamburg, Jim McNeil, Dustin Miller, Matt Buyten, Jimmie McGuire and many, many more make sure that the tricks aren't just executed – they're also clean, co-ordinated and big.

Overall, even the riders seem to dig it. These are guys who go through life preparing for contest after contest and now they get to show off the skills gathered in that pursuit in a completely different way – as an art form. So keep an eye out because Feld is always looking internationally and it may come to an arena near you soon enough. But until then, check out the photos here...





NUCLEAR COWBOYZ

2010 TOUR SCHEDULE >>

Jan 16-17
Jan 23
Jan 30
Feb 6
Feb 13
Feb 19-20
Feb 26-27
March 6-7
March 12-13
March 20-21
March 26-28
April 2-3
April 17-18

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Dallas, Texas
Houston, Texas
Indianapolis, Ind
Atlanta, Ga
Tampa, Fla
East Rutherford, N.J
Birmingham, Ala
San Diego, Calif
Tacoma, Wash
Anaheim, Calif
Ontario, Calif
Rosemont, Ill

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American Airlines Center
Reliant Stadium
Lucas Oil Stadium
Georgia Dome
St. Pete Times Forum
IZOD Center
Jefferson CC
Sports Arena
Tacoma Dome
Honda Center
Citizens Bank Arena
Allstate Arena

NUCLEAR COWBOYZ

OPEN MONDAY - SATURDAY 9am - 6pm | THURSDAY 9am - 7pm

HELMETS JUNIOR

	BOOTS ADULT	BODYBELTS ADULT	RACE JEANS ADULT	NECK BRACES	SPROCKETS
Vcan	£35.00	Fox F3R £230.00	Alpinestars £33.00	MSR NXT from £120.00	Leatt Adventure £175.00
THH TX12	£35.00	Fox Comp 5 £130.00	Fox from £20.00	MSR Renegade £88.00	Gearbox from £6.80
THH TX22	£50.00	Alpinestars Tech 3 £145.00	Shift Flexlite £15.00	MSR AXIS £57.00	Leatt GPX Club £289.00
Fox V1 Race	£90.00	Alpinestars Tech 7 £220.00	Acerbis Profile £27.00	Answer Syncron £57.00	Alpinestars Bionic-SB £210.00
Shift Revolt	£50.00	Alpinestars Tech 8 New £290.00	KNEE GUARDS JUNIOR	Answer Syncron £57.00	Omega £260.00
One Ind. Pixel	£CALL	Alpinestars Tech 10 £330.00	Shift £8.00	Answer Air/Le £119.00	Ultra HD Tubes £21.00
HELMETS ADULT		Shift Combat £95.00	Fox from £10.00	Answer CYK £130.00	Artrax Wavy Discs £39.00
Arai VX3	£CALL	Sidi Crossfire £220.00	UFO Standard £10.00	One Ind. from £13.00	Heavy Duty Tubes £13.00
Troylee designs Air/SE2	£CALL	Diadora MX4 £140.00	UFO Hinged £19.95	Fox Platinum £140.00	Dunlop pads £18.00
Airoh Stelt	from £200	Alpinestars Enduro £145.00	KNEE GUARDS ADULT	Fox 360 from £130.00	EBC MX-S pads £19.50
Fox V1 Race	£100.00	Comp 5 Enduro £135.00	Thor Force £65.00	Acerbis End. H/Guards £CALL	Barkbusters inc. fit kit £50.50
Fox V2	from £120.00	Alpinestars Bionic £66.00	Alpinestars Bionic £66.00	Goldfren pads £12.00	
Fox V3 inc Bag	from £225.00	Fox from £15.00	Fox from £15.00	Acerbis bag Acerbis £17.50	



	GLOVES JUNIOR	GLOVES ADULT	RACE SHIRTS JUNIOR	RACE SHIRTS ADULT
Answer Syncron	£13.50	MX Answer Syncron £19.00	Answer from £17.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00
Answer Air/LE	£23.75	Answer Air/LE £23.75	Fox from £17.00	Shift Faction £115.00
Answer CYK	£23.75	Answer CYK £23.75	Fox from £20.00	Shift Assault £60.00
Scott	£22.00	Troylee designs GP £CALL	Troylee designs SE £CALL	Troylee Designs SE £CALL
One Ind.	£13.00	One Ind. £19.00	One Ind. £17.00	Troylee Designs GP £CALL
MSR	from £9.90	MSR Axis £17.00	Fox Adult from £15.00	Scott from £88.00
TLD	£CALL	MSR Axis £16.75	UFO Adult £16.75	ENDURO JACKETS/PANTS

	GOGGLES	RACE JACKETS/PANTS	RAIN JACKETS/PANTS	CLUTCHES
Oakley Kids	£20.00	MSR Axis £16.00	Alpinestars El Nino jkt £66.00	Friction plates from £18.50
Fox Kids main	£25.00	Troylee designs SE £CALL	Elnino Pants £52.00	EBC clutch kits from £31.80
Scott Junior Voltage	£18.00	Troylee designs GP £CALL	Alpinestars Rain Jacket £42.50	Talon baskets from £75.00
Scott 83 X	£19.95	Fox Polar Paw £30.00	Alpinestars Rain Pants £37.50	
Scott 89 XI Roll off	£44.00	Fox Bomber £35.00	Fox Fluid Jacket £18.00	
Scott 89 XI	£29.50	Alpinestars Neo Moto £24.00	RST Kids Jacket £15.00	

	DEFLECTORS JUNIOR	DEFLECTORS ADULT	RACE JACKETS/PANTS	CHAIN
Fox Main Pro	£49.00	Fox Airframe Youth £65.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00	Rental 520 heavy duty £42.00
Fox Main	£29.00	Fox Airframe Small £60.00	Fox Access PNT £85.00	Regina 520 heavy duty £36.50
Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox AWG JKT £160.00	RK 520 heavy duty £29.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Fox AWG PNT £120.00	Rental 428 heavy duty £28.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Shift Woody Pant £99.00	
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00		
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00		
Quick strap kit	£16.95			
Rip N Roll	£34.00			
Rip N Roll Hybrid	£37.00			

LENSES - SEE OUR WEBSITE

	BOOTS JUNIOR	BOOTS ADULT	BODYBELTS ADULT	RACE JEANS JUNIOR	HANDLEBARS/LEVERS
Alpinestars Tech 4s	£90.00	MSR Renegade £67.00	Answer Air/Le £38.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	
Alpinestars Tech 6s	£115.00	MSR Axis £47.50	Answer Syncron £19.00	Seal Skins £30.00	
Diadora MK3	£75.00	UFO Reactor 2 £44.50	One Ind. £23.00	Zeta clutch lever £33.00	
Fox Comp 5	£95.00	Fox £49.00	Fox from £66.00	Zeta brake lever £33.00	
Shift Combat	£75.00	Thor Sentinel £73.00	Shift Assault £50.00	Fox HC £28.00	
Shift Speedster	£55.00	Fox Turbo £15.00	One Ind. £55.00	Rental fat bar clamps £39.00	
RADZ	£38.00	MSR Helix £16.00	Scott £62.00	Rental twin walls £86.50	

	DEFLECTORS JUNIOR	DEFLECTORS ADULT	RACE JACKETS/PANTS	SOCKS
Fox Main Pro	£49.00	Fox Airframe Youth £65.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00	Fox FRI Kids £7.00
Fox Main	£29.00	Fox Airframe Small £60.00	Fox Access PNT £85.00	Shift Kids £7.00
Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox Adult £10.00	Fox Adult £10.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Shift Adult £10.00	Shift Adult £10.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00	Fox Taper £85.00	
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00	Fox Taper Contour £60.00	
Quick strap kit	£16.95		Taper fitting kit from £22.00	
Rip N Roll	£34.00		Taper bar pads from £10.00	
Rip N Roll Hybrid	£37.00		ASV F3 Levers from £47.00	

	DEFLECTORS JUNIOR	DEFLECTORS ADULT	RACE JACKETS/PANTS	SOCKS
Fox Main Pro	£49.00	Fox Airframe Youth £65.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00	Fox FRI Kids £7.00
Fox Main	£29.00	Fox Airframe Small £60.00	Fox Access PNT £85.00	Shift Kids £7.00
Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox Adult £10.00	Fox Adult £10.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Shift Adult £10.00	Shift Adult £10.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00	Fox Taper £85.00	
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00	Fox Taper Contour £60.00	
Quick strap kit	£16.95		Taper fitting kit from £22.00	
Rip N Roll	£34.00		Taper bar pads from £10.00	
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Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox Adult £10.00	Fox Adult £10.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Shift Adult £10.00	Shift Adult £10.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00	Fox Taper £85.00	
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00	Fox Taper Contour £60.00	
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Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox Adult £10.00	Fox Adult £10.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Shift Adult £10.00	Shift Adult £10.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00	Fox Taper £85.00	
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00	Fox Taper Contour £60.00	
Quick strap kit	£16.95		Taper fitting kit from £22.00	
Rip N Roll	£34.00		Taper bar pads from £10.00	
Rip N Roll Hybrid	£37.00		ASV F3 Levers from £47.00	

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Fox Main Pro	£49.00	Fox Airframe Youth £65.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00	Fox FRI Kids £7.00
Fox Main	£29.00	Fox Airframe Small £60.00	Fox Access PNT £85.00	Shift Kids £7.00
Oakley 2000	£24.00	Fox R3 Youth £50.00	Fox Adult £10.00	Fox Adult £10.00
Oakley Proven	£29.00	Fox R3 Small £40.00	Shift Adult £10.00	Shift Adult £10.00
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior £85.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00	Fox Knee Brace £20.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small £80.00	Fox Taper £85.00	
Smith Fuel Graphic	£53.00	Thor Sentinel £64.00	Fox Taper Contour £60.00	
Quick strap kit	£16.95		Taper fitting kit from £22.00	
Rip N Roll	£34.00		Taper bar pads from £10.00	
Rip N Roll Hybrid	£37.00		ASV F3 Levers from £47.00	

	DEFLECTORS JUNIOR	DEFLECTORS ADULT	RACE JACKETS/PANTS	SOCKS
Fox Main Pro	£49.00	Fox Airframe Youth £65.00	Fox Access JKT £90.00	



WAY OUT WEST!

THE 'WHICH COAST?' SPECULATION IS FINALLY OVER AND AFTER CLASHING WITH NICO IZZI ON THE PRACTICE TRACK MAX GETS TO RACE AT ANAHEIM 1

Words by MAX ANSTIE

At the time of writing this less than two weeks remain until Anaheim 1 – of course, it'll be done and dusted by the time you read this – and I have been placed on the West Coast so all my final testing and preparation is being done right now! I was originally put on the East Coast because I'm the rookie but the final decision was made when the team owner came to Cali and the photoshoots were being done.

It was late in the day and all the photos had been shot so the team owner lined us all up and put us into a 15-lap moto around the SX track. I got the holeshot but in the second corner Nico Izzi decided to try and run me off the track so I used the levers I call brakes and then slotted in right behind him. Two laps went by and I was still right on him so I

pretended to go down the inside of him – I then revved my bike out and he went down.

So another five laps went by and I was sat right behind Davalos and Tickle, I was going through the whoops and on the last whoop I stalled it. By the time I got it going again Nico was right on me. It eventually came down to the last lap, last corner – he came down the inside, I squared it off and beat him to the finish.

We were going down the start straight about to do a 180 back to the trucks. Nico had his bike on the limiter so I stopped to see what was going on and he started shouting a load of crap and then he ghosted his bike into me.

I had started to go so once he rode his bike into me I accidentally dragged it down the start straight

and his throttle cable ripped off so it was wide open and all his plastics smashed off. When I stopped I was all tangled up between my bike and his. So then he storms off yelling about how I am a rookie and that I should let him by me. To say the least it was an interesting day. I learned a lot and feel more ready for Anaheim than ever!

Anyways... We also had a DC ride press day thing that was absolutely sweet! I got to do a freestyle ramp, got to ride with Carmichael and McGrath and got loads of cool DC stuff! I was able ride my race bike today and to be honest I thought they had put me on a 450. So I'm in my final prep time and hitting it hard for Anaheim 1.

Talk to you soon!

Max

MAX POWER

Tommy pounds out the laps at MX Heaven as he prepares for his AMA SX debut at Anaheim

A dynamic photograph of a dirt bike in motion, kicking up a cloud of dust on a dirt track. The bike's front wheel and handlebars are visible, showing a blue and orange color scheme. The background is blurred, emphasizing the speed and action.

FIRST TIMER!

WE CATCH UP WITH BRIT-ABROAD TOMMY SEARLE AS HE PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO HIS FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR HIS DEBUT AMA SX SEASON...

Tommy Searle had a rollercoaster ride in his first season in the USA with some good – and some not-so-good – results. Now, with an outdoor season under his belt, he's preparing to do the AMA rookie bit again – only this time he's going to be indoors. We talked to Tommy as he tested for his first SX season at MX Heaven in Perris, California.

DBR: This is your first real supercross season but you've ridden supercrosses in Europe in the past. What are your thoughts coming into this first season for you?

TS: "I'm feeling good right now so I'm really looking forward to it. Like you said, it's my first season so there's going to be a lot of nerves and stuff at A1 because I've never done it. But I'm riding good tracks and it's not like I'm riding tracks that aren't the equivalent to what we're going to be racing so I'm getting used to it and I feel really good on these tracks. It's my first year but I also feel like I can do good so I want to prove to myself that I can do that."

DBR: You had the same strategy as Tyla Rattray last year

where you sat out supercross and then did only the Nationals – did that hurt you a bit because your competition had been racing already by the time Glen Helen came around?

TS: "Yeah, there's that but there are ups and downs and good and bad points with everything. Racing is racing at the end of the day so it's a benefit over coming in having not raced for six months but then I wasn't used to supercross. I got here in November and I guess I could've been ready for the East Coast but I think I was blowing it up more than what it was in my head.

"I was looking at it like 'oh, it's supercross!' but at the end of the day you're still riding a motocross bike and you're doing the same things. I mean, it's slightly different technique and things but it's generally the same and I believe if you can ride a bike on an outdoor track you can ride it on a supercross track. It's just a mental thing. I kind of got over that and I've found it to be pretty easy with the supercross tracks as long as I take my time and avoid making stupid mistakes. For the most part it's pretty simple. You know what you have to do. You have to jump that jump and downside it here and then drive to get the next one."



TOMMY SEARLE #19

DBR: I saw Joel Roelants a few weeks ago out here in California and told him basically the same thing, that if you're a competitive rider in the GPs there's no reason why you can't do supercross.

TS: "I think there's that but American riders grow up jumping stuff. Even your average track has a lot more jumps than in Europe. Local tracks like Starwest there are lots of small jumps and you have to time stuff and at home you kind of don't have to time stuff so much. That's the difference. But in the end it's similar – you're on a bike at the end of the day."

DBR: You're riding the West so what are your expectations for yourself and your performance in your first-ever supercross championship?

TS: "I don't have huge expectations but I know I'm fit and I'm feeling good on a supercross track. I'm a good rider and I feel good so as long as my confidence is right and I'm doing the right things I think I'll have a really good year. But I also don't want to expect too much of myself and then fall below that and then..."

DBR: ...burn yourself out?

TS: "Yeah. You can start putting more and more pressure for the next weekend and the next weekend and it can bury you. So I don't want to put too much pressure on myself but I'm feeling good and I feel like I can do really well."

DBR: While you were on the track today I was talking with some of your team about how you seem to be very deliberate about your line choices and that sort of stuff. You're very smooth and calculated about how you ride a dirt bike. I didn't see it during the Nationals but I did at the Motocross des Nations when you were chasing down Marvin Musquin. Watching that day I could tell you had a riding style that would work in supercross.

TS: "You probably didn't notice it in outdoors because I wasn't riding like that. That's the thing. Because I was putting so much pressure on myself I wasn't riding how I can ride. Lots of things clicked when I went back home. I felt like my old self again, I was happy to be at the race, I was there with all my friends and family and I was kind of back with my old team that I have a lot of trust in so I knew I had good stuff. The bike wasn't better – it was the same – but I felt good the whole weekend and I felt confident in myself and I think that showed a whole lot."

DBR: A lot of Americans don't know how hard it is for someone like you to just leave and go to another country where everything is different and live there full-time. How hard is it to do that and still concentrate on your job?

TS: "I feel I'm used to it a bit more now. The hard part is the friends and family but you make new friends. You have to surround yourself with good people and it's kind of hard if you don't know so many people around. But I have good people around me and I'm close to all of my family and I speak to them a lot. That's the hardest thing, dealing with being so far from them."

"But I have a nice house, I have a nice place to be in and I have a good routine so it's not a big deal. But, yeah, when I came over here there was some stuff going on in my life at the beginning of last year so it was hard but now I feel really good about it. I feel really comfortable. Like you said, it's a whole different thing. It's hard to go to another country like that. There are a few Americans who have gone to Europe and come home soon after so it is a big difference. I think you have to be open. You have to know there's going to be a big change and you have to get used to it. There's no way around it."

DBR: There was a lot of talk in the off-season about you possibly switching teams because of KTM not having a team in 2010 so how did it work out that you stayed with them this year?

TS: "It was a weird situation that everyone was in. I was told there might not be a team and then about a week later they sat me down in the office with one of the head guys at KTM and they told me they didn't want to do it but that they couldn't afford to run the race team so it was done. They sent me a letter and I signed it that the contract is terminated so then there was pressure on me and that was always in my head. Even though you don't recognise it all the time, it's there."

"Then all of a sudden we sorted things out and they ended up running a team and it's a different team but I think it's way better now how they're running it. They want to do it properly because they felt that last year the team wasn't a proper team and it wasn't run how

"I know I'm fit and I'm feeling good on a supercross track..."
Tommy's been working hard over the winter to get ready for his biggest challenge yet...





F L R



Tommy's British fans will be rooting for him to step up to the challenge of the world's #1 SX series

they wanted it to run. Now it's a proper factory team and we're dealing with the factory and all the parts are sent from Austria.

"There's a guy sending the stuff and we tell him what we need and that's how it is. They're a lot more involved whereas last year they weren't that involved. They just let us do what we wanted and that was it. Now they're saying 'right, if we're going to do this, it's going to be done right' so I'm happy to be where we are now. It's a smaller team but it's better."

DBR: You've got a lot of people in England who follow you and root for you. Is there any added pressure or motivation to perform when you think about that built-in fanbase back home?

TS: "There is. It's kind of a good thing, obviously, to have people who want you to do well. It's not really pressure though. I feel so far away from it when I'm out here to be honest that it's kind of hard to even imagine back home. You can't worry about people back home the whole time. I don't have much to do with what's going on back there now. I'm out here and this is what I'm doing so I have to focus on this and not on that."

DBR: Do you think that your next year in the outdoors is going to be a lot better? Are we going to see a different Tommy Searle than we saw last year?

TS: "I'm sure it's going to be better just from the fact that I learned a lot last year and if I could've changed every race there's something I would've done. There were one or two where I thought it was a good race but it was literally one or two races where I came home and we were happy. The ones I got podiums in, those were good – but you look back and I didn't ride how I should've ridden. Hopefully, this year, with how I'm thinking and what I'm trying to do, we'll have a better year. That's the main thing, to get results and have fun with it. I want to be having fun with it every weekend."

DBR: As bad as you felt at the races to still be that close to the front – sixth in the points – that seems pretty good...

TS: "The first rounds were okay, then in the middle of the season I felt like I was finding a rhythm. And then I had a bad round and had to DNF so I went back to like 13th in points but at one point I was in third in points. I was the solid guy who was banging

in top fives every race but then something went horribly wrong and I just struggled. But it's done and I feel good with what's happening now so I'm happy."

DBR: You're in No Fear riding gear now – is this a team sponsor or is it yours?

TS: "No, it's mine. All the gear is mine. In Europe I was always with Airoh so I'm back with them, too."

DBR: Does it make you feel better to sort of have your own identity as a racer and have your own gear and helmet?

TS: "It's nice. I was always with Alpinestars and Airoh and this year I'm back with Airoh which I'm really happy about because they're good people and I get along well with them and it's a good helmet. I'm with No Fear and I'm getting along with the guys there and they're giving me good stuff along with Spy Goggles."

"And obviously I'm still with Alpinestars boots which is the best boot so I wanted to stay there, too. And FMF is a huge sponsor of mine and I'm really happy with them. They're good guys and they're putting a lot of effort in."

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THE DAVI TRAIN!

HE'S LED A BIT OF A CHARMED LIFE SO FAR BUT THE 2010 SEASON COULD BE MAKE OR BREAK FOR DAVI MILLSAPS...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

When I look at the 2010 Monster Energy SX series there are a few stories that jump out at me as being interesting. The two main combatants – James Stewart and Chad Reed – will both be fine and they will at some point piss each other off and profess extreme dislike for each other, although I'm not sure that Reedy will be able to make as much of a race for the title as he did this past year for a couple of reasons.

One is that James Stewart won't give him that window of opportunity to get some ever important confidence. Last season, the change to the YZ450F wasn't an easy one for Stewart as he struggled in the early rounds with an ill-handling bike. This opened the door for Reed to get in there and almost capture a couple of wins. And here's the thing, even with a bike that visibly didn't allow James to get through the whoops without incident, Reed still couldn't grab a win.

I just don't think the set-up is going to be a problem for the L&M Yamaha team – they are on it and, as team manager Larry Brooks explained to me recently, James is trusting of the team a bit more and will allow them to dictate the direction of set-up a bit. Another reason is Chad's lack of dominance Down Under in the supercross series in his home country of Australia. He was beaten a few times, suffered a couple of crashes and looks to be still getting used to the new Kawasaki. Anyway, we'll see when the gate drops...

One of the more interesting subplots for me involves Team Red Bull Honda Racing's Davi Millsaps and whether or not he can take the long awaited step-up to become a permanent front runner. I'm talking week-in, week-out results that at worse with no crashes are a fifth and at best consistent thirds. There is no doubt that had his contract been up for renewal instead of team-mate Ivan Tedesco it would've been Millsaps on the street looking for a ride but, life being what it is, it was the national winner Tedesco knocking on doors.

It seems like Davi has been around forever and we've been waiting for this enormously skilled rider to blossom but the reality is he's going to turn 22 in February this year. Three years in the premier class a career does not make and maybe the critics (which have included me at times) should sit back and see the complete book before we just read a chapter and judge.

Perhaps the worst thing that could've happened for Millsaps was finishing fourth in the series a couple of years ago. That season included two wins (Detroit and Atlanta), six other podiums and over half the time he was in the top 10. That showed everyone that the kid who quickly grew into a man was ready to battle with the best of them. And that right there is part of the issue with Davi. He's got so much talent but his style is almost like Kevin Windham's so the dastardly 'is he pushing or not?' question comes to mind. It's a style that doesn't always look like he's going all-out. And, just like with Kevin, the question in the pits is where's the desire to win and the dig-down-deep fortitude needed to overcome adversity?

It's been long whispered in the pits that Millsaps is not in the shape needed to compete for wins and championships and that he doesn't have the commitment to be the best that so many others have. It says something when, last summer, the Honda guys were more willing to fly out to Texas to test with Andrew Short than to drive an hour up to Victorville and test with Davi. They knew that whoever went out to Shorty's in Texas was going to see the benefit of their hard work and that the guys who went out with Davi could end up just wasting their time.

By here lies the puzzle with Davi because he captured a moto win last season while Andrew Short did not. That day at Budds Creek, once again, showed us that he can do it. The spark is still there and, more importantly, the skill is there as well. Yes, he faded near the end and just about got passed but a win is a win.

This summer when I asked some of the people associated with Davi what was up they said the all-new Honda CRF450 wasn't fit for him, that he was too big for it and that it wouldn't handle the rough stuff. They all made it sound like the bike was the problem but to me, a former factory mechanic, that's way too easy of a way out.

I don't know what the true story is to be honest and as with most of these things the answer probably lies in the middle of 'he doesn't care' and 'the bike sucks'. What I believe to be true is that Davi is/was burnt out from the grind of being a professional motorcycle racer. Think about it, we've been reading about this kid from Cairo, Georgia, since he was on 80s. His mom and dad were the

ultimate motocross parents, his mom going so far as opening up a training facility that's still tremendously popular with riders from all over the world. He's been groomed to be a motocross superstar, pushed all the time to get better and always had the pressure on him to perform.

After a few inevitable injuries that a motocrosser always endures, Davi's SX performance slipped dramatically in 2009. He's no longer viewed as the next thing and is just in that next pack of riders that, with the right breaks, could make it onto the box at the end of the night. And that's a damn shame because Millsaps has all the tools to become one of the best, he just can't figure out to open the toolbox quite yet.

There are glimpses here and there but not enough focus and, from all accounts, hard work are put into the day-to-day preparation. One person that has extensive time spent down in the Tallahassee region told me that Davi was 'the laziest human being alive' although I have to think that's a little far off the mark. Especially with myself still alive and kicking.

The point I make in bringing this probably erroneous fact up is that the perception is out there with the other riders that he doesn't do much. Imagine if you were halfway through your moto, looked up and saw the #18 Honda a few corners in front of you? The mental boost from knowing he's going to get tired and fade would certainly help you out.

So what do we have for 2010? Well we have an enormously talented rider who is now on the last year of his contract, someone that needs some stellar results to be re-signed by Honda. There is nothing like the thought of the gravy train coming to a halt to motivate someone to try and get back to the grindstone. Having undergone some personal changes this past off-season, Millsaps has an opportunity to make something happen again. Another year on the finicky motorcycle can't hurt, getting back in with his mom and her teachings should help and if he can just work on working hard during the week things should come together.

Which what's going to happen? I don't know to be honest but don't be surprised to see an old face become reacquainted with the podium in 2010.





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SNOW PATROL!

A SKITTERING OF THE WHITE STUFF GIVES SUTTY'S CHRISTMAS TRIALS ADVENTURE A REALLY FESTIVE FEEL...

Words by **Sutty** Photos by **Ariann Morris**

Aint Christmas great? There are a million and one things to love about December 25 and I'm not just on about the plethora of pressies to pile through and fully accessorised turkey dinner to scoff either. No, I'm on about getting the chance to spend a little quality time with your friends and family which for me means loading up TranDawg™ and heading 80 miles or so back to the motherland.

Although it's a bit of a ball-ache to get there now I feel very privileged to have grown up where I did with the sprawling metropolis of Manchester and the beauty of the Peak District National Park both equally within reach which meant I had the best of both worlds right there on my doorstep. I was also fortunate that within a BMXable radius of my Ma and Pa's there was a massive amount of off-road motorcycle events to enjoy – trials, motocross, enduro and even a freak hillclimb! – so even though I didn't partake in the sport myself with a small amount of pedal power I'd be able to see something that'd float my boat.

After trading in my Raleigh Burner to get a real bike – Santa brought me a KX100 for Christmas 1988 – I started riding myself with my first day in the dirt as a total newbie being at my Uncle Raymond's farm. Uncle Raymond was a pretty badass trials rider back in the day so didn't mind me getting to grips with the basics in his bottom field too much. So on a very warm and dry – for the time of year – Boxing Day I had a grand old time hacking around an oval circuit getting used to all the controls and that.

Fast forward 21 years to the day and once again I'm rocking up at Raymond's only this time there's six inches of snow

on the ground – so much for global warming – and I've got a Gas Gas trials bike in the back of the van instead of an MX weapon. Another change is that this isn't the first time I've ever ridden a motorcycle and I'm also a bit taller, wider, greyer, more jaded etc. Still keen as mustard though so it's not all bad!

As my third trials bike the 2010 Gas Gas TXT Pro 250 is by far my favourite – it's a real looker and so far it's performed well too. Out of all the places I ride trials I'd say this is where I ride most often so it's a pretty good place to use as an indication of my own performance and that of the bike's too. Unfortunately, the snow had hidden many of my usual sections with just the brook-based ones good to go even though heavy rainfall had increased the depth of the brook itself by around six to 10 inches with the water temperature barely above freezing – brrrrr!

That didn't stop me splashing around though and I soon had a good feel for riding once more. It's been a while since I last got out and I'd actually forgotten just how great riding trials is for fitness training – it also teaches good throttle and clutch control which is why there are more trials riders that are good at motocross than motocross riders that are good at trials. There's definitely something to be learnt from that.

My trials technique is more bull in a china shop than feet-up finesse and clutch control is something I struggle with so I quite often end up overusing it and jerking through sections like a teenage boy with a copy of Razzle. With this in mind I've made a conscious effort to not use it at all even though I invariably keep a guarded finger over it at all times. The torquey motor of the Gas Gas has enough grunt to get through most clubman style sections without any feathering of the clutch anyway so it's all good.

Actually, the bike literally is all good and with the most laidback of preparation rituals it's running strong ride after ride – both indoors and out. And my riding must be getting better too because I've not broken or bent anything just yet either which after last year's demolition derby effort is a great improvement!

With around six weeks until the motocross season kicks off and my weekend work schedule increases I'll be getting in as many local trials as the already stretched Sutton household budget will allow – I'll keep you updated on how they go next month!

*"Alas poor Yorick,
I knew him well..."*





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SEVENTH HEAVEN?

OVER SIX TOUGH SEASONS IN THE UK SOUTH AFRICAN EXPORT NEVILLE BRADSHAW HAS FOUGHT HIS WAY UP THE DOMESTIC RANKS. NEWLY SIGNED TO ROY EMBERSON'S SAMSUNG YAMAHA TEAM, WILL 2010 BE THE YEAR HE LANDS HIS FIRST MAXXIS CROWN?

Words and photos by Mark Turner

Here's a quick question for you. Apart from all being motocross world champions what do Grant Langston, Greg Albertyn and Tyla Rattray have in common? Need help? Probably not as any motocross fan worth their salt will tell you that they all originate from South Africa.

These three warrant a special mention because they're the most successful but that's not to say they're the only ones who've made the journey from South Africa to Europe to race. Robbie Herring, Ryan Hunt, Paul Cooper and Gareth Swanepoel all spring to mind. And then there's '09 Maxxis MX2 bronze medallist Neville Bradshaw.

Originally from Benoni in Johannesburg, 26-year-old Nev has been racing in the UK for six years after securing a ride with Motovision Suzuki back in 2004. It was a steep learning curve for a pretty raw teenager. "I learned a lot, not only about racing but about life in that first year," he admits. And he also got his first taste of success, ending the year seventh overall in the British MX2 championship and third in the U21s with a points-scoring ride at the Irish GP at Ballykelly thrown in for good measure.

But Lady Luck can be a fickle bitch and his move to MX1 in 2005 – still with Motovision Suzuki – went pear-shaped. The dream of a full season of GPs was realised through Mark Chamberlain's team but after a promising start in the British championship a badly broken foot sustained at Namur – which saw complications with the healing process – put paid to the remainder of the year.

"A hard fought year," is Nev's summing up of 2006. Again on the Motovision Suzuki but this time just concentrating on the domestic championships, Nev was racing against the likes of Josh Coppins, Ken De Dycker, Gordon Crockard and James Noble. "The competition was extremely fierce, those guys were all strong riders on the 450s – I just couldn't step it up to the pace of those guys and I ended

up fifth in the championship."

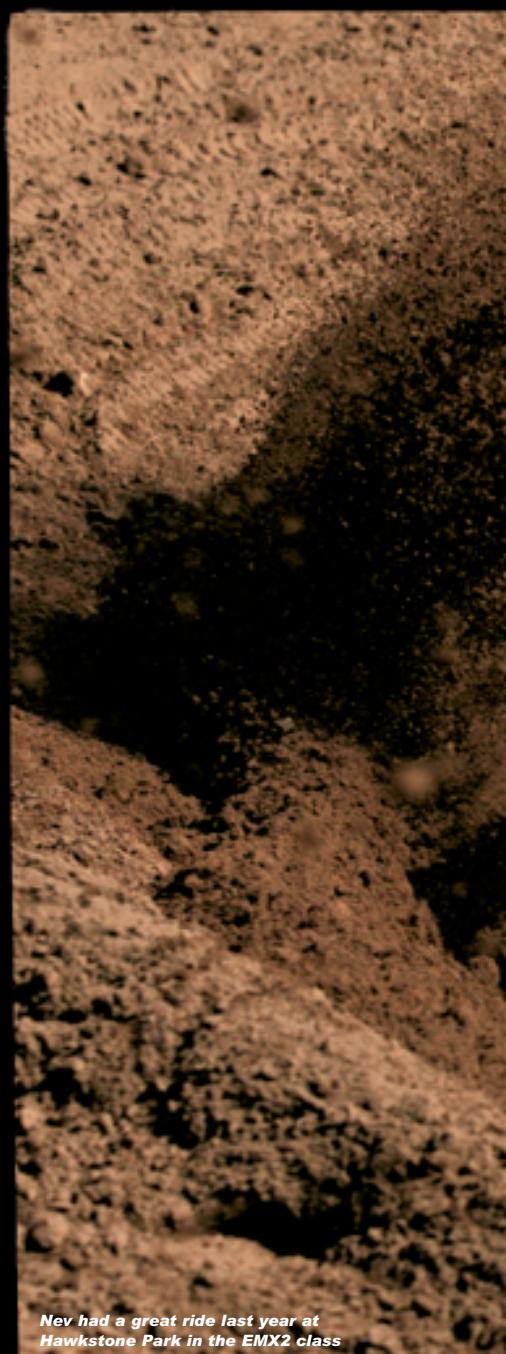
The following year saw Nev stay in MX1 but move to PAR Honda where an early season knee injury had Nev questioning his commitment to racing. "Man that was a terrible year. I crashed and messed up the ligaments in my knee – I had to ride the year out carrying the injury and I had no confidence and wasn't enjoying racing to the extent that I almost quit at the end of that year. But I got the knee fixed during the winter, got my head down and prepared for 2008."

And with a move back down to MX2 with DB Racing Honda, the success that had eluded him over previous seasons started to come his way. That season saw him pay three visits to the podium on his way to fourth overall and he improved to third in '09 as well as lifting the inaugural Red Bull Pro Nats MX2 title, making himself seriously hot property in the process! At a time when the economic downturn meant rides were hard to come by, Nev found his signature was in demand and by late October he had parted company with DB Honda and signed on the dotted line for Roy Emberson's Samsung Yamaha squad.

Let's rewind for a moment to the final round of last year's Maxxis championship at Landrake in Cornwall. The MX2 title was already in Stephen Sword's hands but the silver medal was wide open with Nev sat in second place, four points ahead of Jake Nicholls.

"Going into Landrake I was pretty pumped at how the season was going – third at the European round at Hawkstone, the Red Bull Pro Nationals title – but to finish second in the British championship was a big goal of mine. I worked pretty hard in the weeks leading up to the race getting my starts dialled in – I couldn't afford to leave anything on the table. I knew I was bringing my A game to that race so everything felt good.

"I got a great start in moto one and found myself in second, went for a pass for the lead but got taken down by my team-mate. >>



Nev had a great ride last year at Hawkstone Park in the EMX2 class

Leading Jake Nicholls in the Maxxis series at Brampton – Jake turned the tables in the very last round





© Sutty

A composite image showing Nev on the left driving a car and on the right riding a motorcycle.

THE #272!

NEV'S LUCKY NUMBER...

Superstition always seems to creep in somewhere along the line with racers and Nev's no exception. "Number 27 is my lucky number. It was my first number I used, the number I won my first championship with and I kept it for five years. Even when I won the SA champs in 2000 I was running #2 but had a little #7 behind it. With Lewis Gregory running #27 I went with 272 as it's 27 both ways!"

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DOMESTIC SCIENCE!

WHY NEV'S HAPPY AT 'HOME'

With the prospect of some top quality racing in the UK in 2010 do GPs still appeal to Neville?

"I'd love to do the GPs but at present motocross is my job and I have a family to support. Besides, the racing here in England is very competitive and can pay pretty good if you're doing okay."

Okay, so what about the opportunity to race in the US of A? After all, he's already travelled halfway around the world to get here and compatriots Albee,

Langston and Rattray have all moved on from Europe to the States...

"To be honest I don't know if I would take it. I enjoy racing here in England. I'm making a living, have adjusted to the way of life and have met some really good people. I've still got some unfinished work I'd like to get done in the British championship but, then again, I might change my mind after I return from testing there in January!"



**Chasing down Mel Pocock
at Foxhill last season**





Nev's training hard for 2010 and his attempt to win the MX2 title



© Sunnys

I rushed back to the bike but couldn't get it going – by the time it did fire up I was two laps down and only managed 19th for two points! I came in and felt empty – and really mad. It felt like the whole season's work had been robbed from me in an instant. I honestly believe my first Maxxis moto win was right there but there was nothing I could do.

"Moto two saw me get another good start and I battled hard with Karro for the whole race. I got second which as you know by now wasn't enough. Jake rode out of his skin in that race and got the result he needed to beat me by one point. Fair play to him, he rode a good race. The whole situation sucked but it was out of my control and I believe in the long run it will make me better and stronger."

After Landrake it was a time to reflect. From the outside looking in the last couple of seasons seemed pretty good for Nev. But things aren't always what they seem...

"After Landrake I had a lot of thinking to do. Things didn't feel right with the way the season had ended. I had been speaking to a few people

before the race but it just so happened I stopped in with Roy [Emberson] on the way to the des Nations in Italy [where Nev was representing South Africa], had a look around at what he had to offer and liked what I saw. Roy is a straight-up guy – I like that – so we sorted out a deal which leaves me really excited about the new challenge ahead and I hope we can be successful."

Of course, to be successful you need to be on top of your game and for that many factors need to come together – probably the two most important are bike set-up and fitness and in these respects winter training is every bit as important as the race season. So having just had a month off to recuperate Neville's training programme is now back in full swing.

"At present it's mainly swimming, running and cycling. I had a good programme in place for 2009 and felt my race fitness was pretty spot on so I'm going to stick to that. The harder I work now the easier the racing will be come June. And I've just started riding again and the Yamaha feels great – after we've got the bike

dialled in we'll be off to America to get some serious track time in."

With the 2010 season just around the corner and the winter schedule well under way, what are Nev's aspirations for 2010? Could it be the year when everything falls into place and he secures the Maxxis British crown?

"The aim is to retain the Red Bull title and go for the wins in the British champs. I've learnt a lot over the past few seasons and believe I'm ready to step up to the plate. I'm working hard and the team is working hard so I don't see any reason why we can't aim for the title. I'm ready to go all-in and fight for it!"

"We're going to be racing nearly every weekend – it's a lot of racing but I believe it's the only way to improve and with all the talent in the UK at the moment you're always working hard, no matter what race you're at. There's going to be a load of guys that will be going quick but titles are won through consistency as well as speed. Osborne can carry good speed on the 250F and Jake has stepped it up too as well as Martin Barr. It should be an interesting season."



THANKS FOLKS!

CHEERS M'DEARS...

"First of all I'd like to thank my wife, my family and Andy Lee. Coops for all the help with the training, Matt at Evotech, DB Racing Honda for the last two seasons and everyone who have been supporting me since I've been here in the UK. It's been awesome!"

FOUR STAR?

WITH A HAT-TRICK OF WEC TITLES, MIKA AHOLA'S AIMING TO MAKE IT FOUR ON THE BOUNCE IN 2010 – AND WHO WOULD BET AGAINST THE LIKEABLE, LAIDBACK FINN?

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

Mika Ahola is unquestionably one of the most relaxed riders in the WEC paddock. Oozing confidence thanks to three consecutive world titles, he remains down to earth, focused and is enjoying his racing more than ever before.

The past three seasons have seen Mika perform at his very best. For many years a rider that epitomised the expression ‘coulда, shouldа, wouldа’ due to his habit of snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, he’s now Honda’s best performing off-road rider. Not just in enduro or in Europe but in all sports globally.

Mika is definitely surfing the crest of championship-winning wave. Defeating among others Johnny Aubert, Samuli Aro and Stefan Merriman in ‘07 to clinch the E2 title, he went on to get the best of Ivan Cervantes in ‘08 to secure E1 top honours and last year put the hurt to all his E1 class rivals to make it three in a row.

With each world title Mika has become more relaxed and more confident which hasn’t been a good thing as far as his rivals are concerned. You see Mika, after many fruitless seasons and some serious soul searching, has finally worked out what it is he has to do to win. And having started winning early on in ‘07 he hasn’t stopped since.

“Do I feel under more pressure to win this year? No, absolutely not. The more titles I’ve won the more relaxed I’ve become,” admits the laidback Finn.

“I have a lot more confidence than I did

three years ago. I know I can beat everyone if I am well prepared and my bike is well prepared and as I want it. I have no doubts that I can win this year.”

Unlike some riders who prefer to deliberately play down their chances of success or deny that they believe they can win so as not to put themselves under any pressure, Mika tells it like it is. He knows he’s been one of the very fastest riders in the WEC in recent years and if everything comes together pre-season like he hopes it will why the hell shouldn’t he keep on winning?

“It’s not going to be easy. It’s never easy to win but I’m not expecting it to be easier or harder than other years. I will just prepare myself and my bike as well as I can – like I do every year – and that’s all I can do. Then I’ll ride as fast as I can.”

Making his winning formula sound painfully simple, many see Mika’s 2010 season as potentially one of his toughest in recent years. Not least because he’ll face KTM’s Ivan Cervantes and BMW’s Juha Salminen as well as more than a few young riders all determined to make their mark in E2.

“Juha Salminen will be fast,” admits Mika. “I have raced against him on 125s and in the 500 class before. When we raced each other I was the rider competing on a bike that needed to be developed. Now it’s the other way around. I know my bike is ready to race and Juha is the one developing his bike. That’s an interesting point for me. He will be faster than he was in ‘09, that’s for sure. Ivan will be fast too but there is also going to be some other riders I >>

profile

Mika Ahola races to WEC title #3 in '09 – he's aiming to make it four on the trot in 2010



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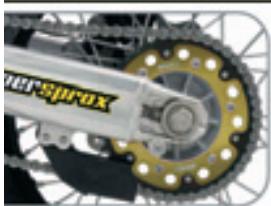
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will have to watch out for. There always is."

One rider Mika won't have to race against is Johnny Aubert. With KTM wanting to ensure they cover all their bases and have a top rider in each of the WEC's three senior classes it looks as if Aubert, the reigning E2 class champion, will race in E1 during '10. But is Mika disappointed he won't get to race against the rider that dominated the class during '09?

"No, I'm happy," explains Mika while laughing loudly. "Johnny is a really good rider. A great

rider. But I've beaten him before so I wasn't worried about racing against him if he was staying in the E2 class. To be honest I was looking forward to battling with him. When I heard he was going to race in E1 I knew that there would be other strong riders to compete against and it looks like I will race against Ivan Cervantes again. You can't escape competing against world champions, you always have to race against one of them in enduro."

The way in which Mika dominated the E1

class during the first half of the '09 WEC season is proof of just how complete and tough a performer he has become. Winning the first five rounds of the series, Ahola rocketed to the top of the class points standings almost as if he was racing against inexperienced competitors.

"I was really confident that I could win last year," admits Mika. "I'd won the class the year before and I was enjoying my racing like never before. I knew I'd have to work hard, which I did. I guess I was hungry to win again but relaxed at the same time. That was a great combination, one that allowed me to perform at my best. I really wanted to win."

"I could see that I could win the title from the middle of the season. After I won both days in Finland I knew. I won again after that and my confidence grew and grew. I knew then that I didn't need to keep on winning. I was waiting for Antoine Meo to get faster, which he did. But by the time he started winning I had such a good lead I didn't need to worry too much." >>

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FINNISH FALL OUT!

WHY MIKA MISSES THE ISDE >>

Despite being one of Finland's best ever enduro racers Mika hasn't competed at the International Six Days Enduro for a long, long time. Not because he doesn't enjoy the event but because of a difference of opinion with his home federation.

"I can't see myself racing the ISDE again, not any time in the near future. It all depends on the Finnish federation. Money is the major issue because for me to ride the ISDE I have to pay some of my expenses personally. It's also a very difficult race. Instead of racing the six days I'd rather race the Indoor Enduro World Cup because I am getting older and it is good for me. You need to have a lot of aggression and good reflexes to race indoors. I think that type of racing is better for my career and speed now."

Despite not being a part of the six days Mika has enjoyed more than his fair share of success at the event. "Knowing that I have three ISDE overall wins is really special but the world titles mean the most to me. When I was winning the six days with TM and VOR I can remember thinking that I might not ever win a world championship. Now I have three ISDE overall wins and three WEC wins."



One thing Mika agrees on is that competition in the WEC is getting stronger. With a growing number of MX racers entering the series and a healthy number of youngsters the international enduro scene is extremely competitive.

"The competition gets tighter all the time. The gaps between riders in all classes is incredibly small. There are exceptions at some races but generally competition is really close. Enduro isn't road racing yet the gaps are the same even if we have much longer days. Everybody is pushing harder and harder for the results and riding on the limit. The real question is who can ride on the limit for the longest time without going over the edge and making mistakes."

Knowing that he will need to be on top of his game right from the very start of the WEC, Mika

decided long before the '09 season ended that he would begin his preparations sooner than in previous years. Normally keeping himself busy with indoor events during November and early December, Mika then heads to the Philippines for six weeks of rest and relaxation.

"My plan is to be 100 per cent ready for the first race in April. I'm coming back from my end-of-year diving holiday in the Philippines earlier than I normally do so I can start practising in Spain from the beginning of January. I will test and train in both Spain and in Italy which should ensure that I'm ready."

So far Mika has made just one outing aboard a 450 which didn't go as well as planned. Not that Mika is too worried about it. Missing the opening round of the Indoor Enduro World Cup

A solid start to '09 put Mika firmly in the driving seat early on



in Sheffield through illness, Mika's debut ride came at the Genoa Indoor Enduro where he started his diving holiday early! Before the racing had properly begun Mika found himself submerged in the water hazard – and not for the first time. "It was the second time that's happened to me in Genoa," he laughs. "The last time it happened the event went really well, this time it wasn't so good."

"But I'm really enjoying being back on a 450. Straight away I was cornering much better than on a 250cc four-stroke. We will have to see if I can be faster on a 450 but I feel much more comfortable. I have always liked big engined bikes so having raced a 250cc four-stroke for a few years now I hope I will be able to ride a 450 even better than before."

DOUBLE DOSE!

COLTEN FACCIOCCI TAKES BOTH WINS AT THE SECOND ROUND OF THE FWSX SERIES AT BIRMINGHAM'S NEC...

Words and photos by Sutty

Held just one week after the season opener, in the same venue but on a completely different track, the second round of the Future West supercross series continues to offer thrills, spills and chills – Hall 5 is quite drafty don't you know? – to British motocross fans at Birmingham's NEC. The Dirt Wurx-constructed circuit is one of the best ever built for UK supercross and it's definitely one of the fastest too with high-speed double jumps and rhythm sections as well as a tricky off-camber corner and a whoop section that requires total commitment and certainly separates the men from the boys!

Amazingly, it's one of the least technical sections of circuit that puts an early end to Zach Osborne's evening and all hopes of winning either championship. After leaping out into an early lead in the SX2 Main Event, Zach's attack falls apart over the finish line double with a bone-jarring opening lap crash that the UTAG Yamaha rider is lucky to walk away from.

With Osborne dusted 21-year-old Canadian Colton Facciotti picks up out in front and easily wins his second SX2 Main Event in as many weeks. WORCS champ Mike Brown finishes a distant second to consolidate his silver medal position in the series standings while Kyle Beaton and Ben LaMay battle it out for third and fourth with the Canadian Beaton finally beating the Alaskan to the final step on the podium.

Facciotti's equally as efficient in the SX1 Main as he heads Brown – who's a little lacklustre this week after only jetting in from America on the morning of the event – home once more. LaMay powers his Samsung Yamaha to third this time to keep his championship hopes alive as only five points split the leading three contenders.

One of the fastest riders to turn a wheel around the NEC circuit on the night is JAR Honda's David Goosen who takes victory in the British Open class. Goosen's devastatingly quick all evening long and after some bad luck earlier in the night that sees him involved in a nasty looking accident that leaves a marshal with a broken leg the South African who's based in Portsmouth puts it all behind him to dominate the domestic class.

"This weekend's been awesome for me," reckons David. "The races were good and I was battling with guys that win races week-in, week-out so that filled me full of confidence. I made a few mistakes in the heat races which gave me a bad pick of the gate for the SX2 race where I felt like I could challenge for the podium then it was really cool to stand at the top of the podium in the British Final."



Canadian Colton Facciotti
races to a double victory
in Birmingham



Zach Osborne's evening ends early with a major bail-out in the SX2 Main

SERIES STANDINGS

PRO SX1 >>

1 Colton Facciotti 45 points, 2 Mike Brown 45, 3 Ben LaMay 40,
4 Gordon Crockard 37, 5 Ryan Blizzard 32, 6 David Goosen 32

PRO SX2 >>

1 Colton Facciotti 50 points, 2 Mike Brown 44, 3 Kyle Beaton 36,
4 David Goosen 34, 5 Ben LaMay 33, 6 Ryan Blizzard 29

BRITISH OPEN >>

1 Gordon Crockard 41 points, 2 Jordan Booker 36, 3 Danny Tollet 34,
4 James Dodd 34, 5 Richie Worrall 29, 6 Rowan Hill 28

CLUBMAN LITES >>

1 Chad Yarranton 50 points, 2 Jason Varnham 40, 3 Matt Bayliss 37,
4 Christy Harnett 36, 5 Rowan Hill 29, 6 Ross Clarke 27

CLUBMAN OPEN >>

1 Chad Yarranton 38 points, 2 Carl Jones 36, 3 Aaron Jenner 33,
4 Alex Smith 31, 5 Mark Perfect 29, 6 Richard Gray 27

QUADS >>

1 Giles Davis 47, 2 Oli Sansom 38, 3 Paul Broomhead 37,
4 Richard Tordoff 35, 5 Justin Reid 34, 6 Mark Watson 25

Aussie super X

Chad Reed retains his
Aussie Super X crown but
it's no walk in the park



THE X FACTOR!

CHAD REED STEALS THE THUNDER DOWN UNDER AS THE AUSTRALASIAN SUPER X SERIES CONTINUES TO INNOVATE AND GROW...

Words and photos by Matty Muir

“We came here with a goal in mind and I'm just glad we were able to achieve that for my new team." Chad Reed makes it sound oh-so simple but in reality defending his Australasian Super X Open class crown is anything but...

The seven-round series – an Aussie hybrid of supercross that takes the established race format and stands it on its head – is marked by intense rivalry and unpredictability and the truth is Chad has to work hard to retain his title.

After its successful debut in 2008, the Down Under series continues to grow and for 2009 achieves international status with a round in New Zealand. There's also live TV coverage which helps to raise public awareness plus some high-profile AMA big-hitters who head Down Under to make sure the new Monster Energy Kawasaki signing has to fight to keep his hands on the #1 plate.

US-based Aussie Dan Reardon hounded Reed in '08 before succumbing to a shoulder injury and is back home looking for revenge. And also joining the fray is Reed's former Suzuki team-mate Michael Byrne, Jay Marmont – the only man to beat Reed last year – and 17-year-old sensation Tye Simmonds who's stepping up to the Open class and hoping to rise to the occasion. Add to this guest appearances from Jeremy McGrath, Josh Grant and Davi Millsaps and all the ingredients are

in place for a searing series.

The opening round in Tasmania doesn't go as planned for Reed as he debuts his new Kawasaki ride Down Under. After being sent to the LCQ and then chasing from the back of the pack in the finals, third overall is the best he can manage. His absence at the front plays into the hands of Marmont and Reardon who finish first and second.

But at round two in Geelong, Victoria, Reed turns it all around with an emphatic victory, taking three out of four Main Event wins in the quad challenge final format. The other final winner is Reardon who also cards three second places for second on the night ahead of tenacious teenager Simmonds who establishes himself as a legitimate player with third overall.

Just as it seems that normal order has been restored Reed's pushed onto his back foot at round three in Perth with Reardon snatching a hard-fought win and a two-point lead in the championship. And at round four in Canberra it's Marmont who takes his second victory of the season with a 2-2-1 card as Reed DNFs the last of the three finals.

So with three rounds remaining the title chase is a three-man show with Reardon leading Marmont and Reed and just eight points the gap from first to third.

What makes the Aussie Super X championship unique is the way the format varies from event to event and round five in New South Wales sees >>

AMA ace Davi Millsaps makes an appearance at the final round

Steve Cox



© Steve Cox

QUICKFIRE

CHAD REED >>

DBR: How do you feel the level of competition has been compared to 2008?

CR: "It has definitely stepped up. It was exciting you know. I came into this series after a long season already and to be honest I wanted to also use this period as some time off. But Jay Marmont and Dan Reardon really made me earn this title, I had to get back to work and couldn't slack off."

DBR: With the series heading overseas to New Zealand do you see a realistic chance of further growth into, say, South East Asia in the coming years?

CR: "Absolutely, the potential for Super X is exciting and the TV package is already doing very well so no matter where we race it's going to be viewed by a lot of people. We already have an awesome fanbase so as long as we pick and choose where we go carefully it will better the sport."

DBR: How smooth has the switch to Kawasaki machinery been?

CR: "It's been a pretty simple change I feel. Early on I think I made it look harder than it was. I wasn't putting the effort in and about a week before round five I starting taking things seriously and getting back into it. We have also had some new tyres come through which have made a difference."

DBR: With switching teams and missing testing in the US due to your Australian commitments, would you say racing here has still helped in your prep for the 2010 AMA SX series?

CR: "Yeah, there's nothing like racing. In all honesty I had a long year. If I had stayed in the US it would have been straight from the last National to the des Nations to the US Open to testing. At least over here I can avoid most of that. I'm also lucky that Ryan Villopoto is nearly finished his testing so we already have a good base to develop the bike from. So really it's actually easier and a great preparation for me compared to if I was there all time."

DBR: Do you feel there is any advantage to having Villopoto as your new team-mate?

CR: "It's always going to be good having someone in the truck that you're competing with who you know is giving his all every weekend. He's doing the lap times that I'm doing and that can only make the team and the bike stronger. You know normally it's just one dominant guy on the team and it sometimes feels like you're developing the bike all on your own. So with having two guys doing the same laps at the track I think we can grow from it and hopefully step it up to put ourselves in positions one and two by season's end."

DBR: Would you consider doing any European races in 2010?

CR: "Truthfully, in 2010 with my commitments there's just no chance. I do love Bercy, the fans and the overall feel just excites me. It's been a long time away for me from that event. When I did race there last I planned on returning every year after that but then this Australian deal came up and I haven't been able to get a weekend off since. So really that's the only one I would probably consider in the future."



Homegrown hotshot
Lawson Boppin is just
one of many Aussies
benefiting from the series



Brisbane is the biggest
SX track ever built outside
of the USA

QUICKFIRE

JOSH GRANT AND
DAVI MILLSAPS >>

DBR: "How does Aussie Super X compare to the AMA series?"

JG: "Well for a start it's different competing in the varied race formats. In the States with the 20-lap Main Events you can pull some time and get a pace going away from the pack. The shorter races and multiple starts meant tighter racing and it was a fast pace up front."

DM: "Well the pace we were running up front really wasn't any slower to what we run back home. The top guys like Chad, Reardon and Josh they race AMA so it's been fast but just a bit different."

DBR: What did you think of the race format?

JG: "Overall it was good. Like I said this type of event makes for a lot closer competition. This is great for the fans and definitely makes it more exciting to watch so all in all I think it's pretty cool."

DM: "The three six-lap races were a lot of fun. It's really enjoyable and obviously good for the fans and TV viewers. I wouldn't mind doing that format again."

DBR: Do you think a race of this standard is a genuine help as a warm-up for next season?

JG: "It can be but it depends on conditions. I mean with the rain here tonight you don't want to go out there and try and kill yourself to win a race. My season starts in four weeks so I have to be aware of that but it can definitely help."

DM: "Yeah, for sure. You can't beat that time spent racing – things like your starts and speed off the gate. But in saying that you don't want to go 110 per cent just because it's so close to the new AMA season. You come here and do what you have to do to get a podium, then train harder and go ahead to Anaheim 1."

DBR: Would you consider racing in Australia again or heading over to Europe to race in next year's off-season?

JG: "Definitely Australia for sure, I like it here. I think with how well they build the tracks it's a great way to come out and get some practice. Europe, well, I'm not too pumped on. I'm not a fan of Bercy at all so really Australia is about the only place I would come back to."

DM: "I'll be back in Australia next year for sure, I had a lot of fun and want to come back. Something like Bercy, well, maybe – we'll see. I'm not a big fan of doing many overseas races, I just try to do one or two here and there. If I come back here next year and do three races that's me done."

Millsaps follows Reed home in Brisbane

AMA star Josh Grant samples SX Down Under



one of the most cut-throat race programmes with a series of heats eliminating riders until only five remain in the final. This allows very little room for error and it's Reardon who's the first of the big names to slip up as he's eliminated in the heat stage. Both Reed and Marmont make the final alongside SX legend McGrath, Daniel McCoy and Simmonds. Looking to make up lost ground caused by his DNF, Reed takes the holeshot and checks out as McGrath edges out Marmont for second.

With no score Reardon drops to third in the series standings with Reed now holding second, just one point behind Marmont. But there's still only 10 points separating the top three as the contenders head to Waikato in New Zealand for the penultimate round and with four sprint race finals consistency is the key.

And the king of consistency on the night is Reed. Finally finding solid form on the Kawasaki, the two-time AMA SX champ is hardly challenged as Reardon does what he can to limit the damage, taking third overall behind

Simmonds. But Marmont has a terrible night with a huge crash in the fourth final and takes home only six points.

The final round in Brisbane provides a fitting finale. It's the biggest SX track ever outside the US – over a kilometre long and built using 7,500 tons of dirt with lap times well over the minute mark – and 25,000 fans turn out to see if Reed can defend his 14-point lead over Reardon.

Josh Grant and Davi Millsaps jet in from the States to add a little extra spice to the night so the startgate is packed with class for the three-race triple challenge final. A huge downpour forces organisers to cut the final races down to five laps and although all three see different riders pull the holeshot it's Reed who makes it a perfect three from three to secure the championship.

Millsaps takes the second spot on the podium after battling with a smooth and consistent Marmont who's third on the night and in the series while Reardon comes home fourth to take second in the points standings.



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TRICK TREATS!
DAMON WALES AND HIS MEAN MACHINES

SW SHOWDOWN!
THE RIDERS LINING UP TO TAKE ON OLLIE OSMASTON

STROKERS WILD!
BW85 OR EIGHTH-LITRE SCREAMER?

JAY THOMAS

SW SHOWDOWN!

WHO'S THERE IF OLLIE WOBLES?

With Ollie Osmaston declaring that he will be on the 85cc SW startline again at this year's nationals, the section has an obvious and clear cut favourite. But just who will be taking the battle to him?

Over the past months a few of the likely suspects have been out and about in winter action. Recently at Wilden Lane – with Jack Seabourne, David Keet, Conrad Mewse, Greg Hyett, Robert Yates, Danny Lanfear and Lewis Houghton all turning up – a few clues were there to be seen. Or were they?

At the end of the day my overall conclusion was one of very little to choose between any of them. And the section just behind Ollie Oz really is totally up for grabs. Jack, Robert and Conrad all took a good race win each as Greg and Lewis chipped in to share out the second place finishes going 2-1 in Greg's favour. As for David,

he looked sprightly just behind the main contenders. Danny looked just as quick and as strong as anyone but generally was right out of luck with machine problems.

And 12-year-old Greg from Droitwich Spa was also on the wrong end of a really unlucky mechanical failure on the day – and that most likely cost him the overall result. After the event I sat down with Greg and MX mom Helen to chat about this and that and here's how it all went...

Rage: Who of your rivals you've raced with recently have you been most impressed with?

GH: "Oh for sure Conrad Mewse today and Josh Gilbert at other meetings."

Rage: Who was your personal favourite as youth rider of the year in 2009?

GH: "I don't really have one as favourite but I

thought Ben and Nathan Watson along with Conrad Mewse and Ben Howell were best."

Rage: What competitions have you entered for 2010 and have you set yourself any goals?

GH: "I'm hoping for top six finishes in both the Elite Youth Cup and the BYMX championship."

Rage: Do you as a family have any particular concerns about youth MX at the moment?

HH: "The only real concerns are that with more and more tracks being shut down by local councils the clubs are not able to offer the youth MX riders the variety of tracks and soon there will be no tracks left for this sport to survive. Local authorities should be backing our youngsters. We would also like to see a lot more coverage on TV to encourage and promote the sport."

Robert Yates takes a race win at Wilden Lane



Conrad Mewse should be firmly in the mix in 2010



SW85cc hotshot Greg Hyett is in great form at the moment



Wilden Lane winner Jack Seabourne



Sam's size may force him to abandon the BW85 machine and move up to a 125...



SAM WINTERBURN

DOB: 16-11-95 **HOMETOWN:** SKIPTON, YORKSHIRE **RIDE:** COLIN APPLEYARD SUZUKI

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Richie Worrall, Luke Dean and James Dunn have all won youth national titles at 85cc level in recent years and they all have their names proudly emblazoned on the Suzuki champions roll of honour. Could it be Sam Winterburn's turn next?

Well Paul Butler, the Doodson Suzuki youth team manager, is just one of a growing band of watchers who certainly think that may well be the case in 2010. Paul has thrown his cap into the ring with a healthy chunk of engine and suspension parts back-up. The help will assist the Colin Appleyard runner throughout the coming season and Sam will be regarded as a satellite rider to the main Doodson Suzuki youth squad. And he'll also be a regular at the British MX Academy training days run by Paul Butler with the added bonus of guidance from Stephen Sword.

For the past three years Sam has been fully

under the wing of the Yorkshire-based Colin Appleyard concern who have always rated him very highly and backed him to the hilt. The next two years are also looking secure for Sam as, in his own words, he's just inked a "reet good deal with them".

At the back end of last season in one of Sam's best individual race performances of the year he showed a little of his true potential – and a flavour of what might be in store for 2010. The race in question was the final BW encounter at the Norley team event and Sam caught the eye with a fizzing display that almost overturned race winner Ben Howell. Both boys were lapping on pretty much the same times but with Sam pushing the harder over the closing stages he finished just a few seconds short of what could have been a famous victory.

There was more of that particular brand of fire and brimstone on display at Polesworth



Jake Penny had a stellar '09 season but he's got his work cut out this year

PLUCKY PENNY!

JAKE LIFTS RINGWOOD TITLE

Rising Somerset star Jake Penny sealed a great season in 2009 when he claimed the Ringwood club's Senior championship after a solid year campaigning a YZ125.

The 15-year-old from Frome is looking to step it up in 2010 and will be racing the MC Federation British two-stroke 125cc adult nationals and the Best of British BSMA 125 schoolboy senior nationals plus any other national and club meetings he can fit in. It's going to be a big challenge for Jake but after a winter spent training with Dave Thorpe he'll be fighting fit for what's to come.



recently. At the end of the day the show had Suzuki enduro ace Paul Edmondson waxing lyrical as he reported back to Paul Butler.

The only blip on the horizon – as with so many 14-year-olds these days – could well be Sam's size. Sam is a growing lad and in a similar position to that of James Dunn last term so the machine situation will be monitored all season. If it's felt at any point that the 125 is needed to further improve then that's the way they will go.

Either way Sam will definitely be one to keep an eye on with a free-flowing, aggressive style that's sure to rattle a few cages in 2010. If Sam does go all season running an 85cc machine he's already my joint tip along with Jay Thomas to lift the KWS mini Masters title. And in BYMX speak Sam is certainly as quick as anyone else viewed over the winter months with his Polesworth performance in December being truly outstanding.



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STROKERS WILD!

SIMON SETTLES FOR A SCREAMER

One of the most talked about issues in youth MX circles over the past few months has been the 125cc two-stroke debate. It seems like every rider in the 14 to 15 age group and their parents alike would love to see the class fully restored at all youth national series.

The most common argument put forward would seem to be clear and simple. Taller kids feel awkward or generally under-powered on the 85cc machine and the 250F is just too much of a leap into the unknown for most riders at 14. And if you're a little older but smaller in stature then the thought of potentially going bar to bar with an 18-year-old giant on a 250F can seem to be a bit daunting.

It's also worth noting that if you're not some sort of a mechanical genius the 250F can seriously damage your financial health too. So the eighth-litre capacity machine fits the bill and bridges the gap perfectly – it's cheaper to run, easy to maintain and is a great platform for intermediate rider equality.

One guy who recently found himself in this particular machine choice dilemma is 15-year-old Simon Booth and he opted for the 125cc stroker. Simon and dad Paul from Cirencester have been regular figures at all of the youth nationals over the past few years. But the choice for them next term is clearly between the BSMA who have made a dedicated return to the 125cc stroker code and the Red Bull MCF Junior 125cc two-stroke championship series.

Last year Simon battled away in all three national codes with a 13th place overall finish in the BYMX BW standings looking the best on his CV. Over the winter months he has been competing in the Wilden 125cc championships in a mixed-capacity division run under ORPA rules. Simon's been toughing it out with the F word gang and to his credit he performed really well with a pair of sixth place overall finishes at the final two rounds to his name.

But as Simon says "roll on Spring 2010" as he just can't wait to be on a startline that's rammed with 125cc screamers.



TRICK TREATS!

THE NOTTS RIPPER WITH EXOTIC TASTES

There was a new kid in the paddock at Mildenhall for the opening round of the 2009 BYMX series. Nothing new there you might think! But when he rolled out a genuine piece of ex Tony Cairoli Yamaha kit from the back of the family motorhome a few jaws hit the ground with a resounding thud.

The kid in question was 15-year-old Nottingham-based youngster Damon Wales and the machine turned out to be the practice iron that TC had used at the end of the '08 season. Fast forward to mid-season and with Cairoli about to announce his move to KTM Damon beat him to it, taking delivery of a Muscle Milk KTM direct from Tommy Searle. The paddock was awestruck for a second time.

So what can he do for the 2010 season? Well Team Walesy have a third spectacular already at the final planning and execution stage. At this moment in time Damon is currently Stateside testing with Tommy and the rest of the KTM crew. The name of the game is suspension and Damon will be returning early in February with a special 2010 works style rear set-up fully tested, sorted and tucked away in his suitcase.

The right stuff continues with a blueprinted engine together with a full compliment of other trick bits being shipped over direct from the US. The fully assembled machine is due to break cover just in time for the opening national rounds

in March. And it's all shaping up to be the best machinery coup so far.

Damon is for sure living the dream at the moment. But the past 12 months have been far from plain sailing following a serious shoulder break in January '09. The injury kept him out for the best part of three months. The shoulder's still not quite 100 per cent but full strength levels and – more importantly – pre-accident confidence levels are now returning.

In the early part of his career Damon made a real name for himself in YMSA and Midland events being especially noted for his blistering speed and fearless ability through corners. Damon won YMSA championships in 2007 at BW level and again in 2008 becoming their unbeaten winter series MXY2 champion. Last year in the various youth nationals Damon showed on more than one occasion that he definitely does have what it takes to get on the box at the highest level.

In 2010 the hopes are particularly high for podium finishes at BYMX and at Maxxis MXY2 events. In the KWS MXY2 series Damon starts as one of the clear favourites after finishing in fourth place overall last time around. So in 2010 keep your eye out for Damon who will be running the familiar 222 Cairoli plate in all competitions except BYMX where he will go with the Tommy Searle #123.

GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

Then contact our Youth Editor Mike Gurney at mikegurney55@yahoo.co.uk



HAPPY NEW YEAH!

OUR ANTIPODEAN ADVENTURER MAKES THE MOST OF HIS FINAL FEW DAYS OF DOWNTIME BEFORE THE HARD WORK REALLY KICKS OFF...

Words and pics by **Billy MacKenzie**

It's been really weird over here in December. Back home the country is overwhelmed by Christmas – people start to do their shopping at the end of November, the TV is full of adverts, every shop you enter has decorations. Well there's none of that over here! It's like Christmas doesn't even exist apart from the actual Christmas Day – I know that sounds dumb but in the UK Christmas creeps up on you all month, here it was over and done with in a day.

Before Christmas fell upon us I booked us a trip to Fraser Island. It's a three-day, two-night camping trip with complete randoms on the biggest sand island in the world. It's also one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen. We stayed at the backpackers place the night before and had to go through the usual briefing where we meet our fellow backpacking adventurers! As we all sat around watching this s**t video of the dos and don'ts – 'do not feed the dingos', 'do not drop rubbish', 'do not have fun' – we started to suss the crew out straight away.

There was some uni goon from Wales, these two German control freaks, a guy from Canada who looked like Lance Armstrong who was just going with the flow and some mental Czecho woman who claimed she was from England. The woman who was giving the briefing was a bit nuts and quite funny, telling stories of a six-legged bird-eating spider called Hairy McLairy that lives in the toilets. She was laughing and giggling to herself and was even more entertaining than her stories. All the while newly appointed team leader uni geek was nodding along intently and agreeing with everything she said. Soon as she was finished he had a pen and paper ready and started to organise our trip. He wrote down all our shopping, was adamant he had to drive and assured us he was trained in first aid.

Harriet was curious to see if he was actually a complete tit and started interrogating him. He said he was here to recover from a big bender in Thailand but after further questioning it turned out he'd only been sight-seeing and walking!

Next morning came and we all bundled in for three days together. I drove to the boat to show team leader how to drive in sand then off the other side team leader took control. The back of

the 4x4 was all over the shop, smoke was pouring out the bonnet and after the constant beeping of the radiator heat gauge he and the group decided it would be a good idea for him to pull over and drown himself in the sea before we carry on! He was a bit embarrassed when we had to stop but I got to take over which I was pleased about because I like driving! We headed to a couple of lakes and pretty much all did our own thing.

Later we all sat round and got to know each other while team leader cooked us our grub – fair play to him. It was interesting to watch how alcohol would relax the group and get everyone talking – I sat back and took everything in as more and more 4X4s arrived. Later that night some aboriginal kids came to the camp absolutely steaming drunk! Their names were Dinka Dinka and Smiley and they put on a little show for us – I later found out it's just a scam they pull on tourists to get some cash. That night they ended up fighting each other they were that drunk, right outside my tent too! I couldn't get to sleep so I stuck my head out and looked at the stars with Harriet. The sky is amazing in Oz – you can see the mist of the Milky Way and 10 times as many stars as you would see on a clear night in the UK.

In the morning we woke up to the crazy Czech woman and the German kid arguing about her slicing bread on the bonnet of the 4X4! It was really funny – the old bird had been making us sandwiches and took a bread knife down the bonnet while cutting the sandwiches, leaving big scratches all over it. Germany was pissed off he was gonna lose his insurance bond and Czecho was shouting at him with a mouth full of sandwich!

Our last stop was Lake MacKenzie – the most awesome fresh water lake ever. Completely clear with a white sand beach and we spent the whole day there just playing Frisbee, messing with the camera and trying not to get eaten by massive killer ants!

We got back for Christmas – probably one of my nicest Christmas days ever, apart from when I got my Malaguti 50 all those years ago. It was just me and Harriet and we had loads and loads of presents – since it was just us buying for each

other we got lots of cool things and it was a weird grown-up feeling having our first Christmas just the two of us. I got a telescope! I ain't managed to use it yet because it's been pretty cloudy and stuff for a few weeks but I'm really into astrology and stuff at the moment – geeky I know. I got a big book of all the stars and constellations etc so I can work out what I'm looking at!

We had plans for New Year to head to Melbourne but first we had to pass the time in between. I didn't wanna sit around doing nothing and I still didn't have my new practise bike so we checked out a big folk festival running for an entire week. I didn't know what to expect but it sounded fun – lots of hippies, music and circus freaks. Tickets were expensive but we heard sneaking in was easy so after driving straight into the camping grounds with no hassle we snuck under a fence and we were in! I had this unusual guilty feeling about it though – the festival was based on a kinda trust and respect thing. It was not what I was expecting – I was thinking something like V Festival or Glastonbury. We wandered around pretty aimlessly – there were not a lot of shows catching our attention. A few really funny comedians maybe but apart from that the music was, well, very folky! We passed a couple days there though and saw some pretty cool things and it was good to have another experience of different kinds of people.

An Aussie kid we met in Thailand had kept in touch and invited us down to Melbourne for New Year. There was a big event on at the main stadium – an all-white clothing dance party called Sensations. We landed in Melbourne on New Year's Eve and cruised around the city for a while, there were people everywhere dressed in white round the city – obviously all there for the party so it made it real easy to chat to everyone. The place was packed – 40,000 people all dressed in white, it was so cool! Me and Harriet were straight off dancing and checking out the mental scenery! Before we knew it, it was the countdown and we were right in the mix of all the crowd – 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 – and it kicked off! Fireworks, water fountains, everyone jumping up and down. Music rose and so did the vibe and energy from everyone. We were in 2010!



After we scoped most of the place out we decided it was time for some rest and recuperation so we headed back to the hotel for air con and sleep to recharge our batteries for Summerdayz, the music festival that was next on our list! It started at 10am and by the time we had all the sleep we needed it was 2pm. After the three Ss we were on our way! Harriet was getting stopped quite often by people asking her if she was Ruby Rose, a well-known MTV presenter in Oz. So she decided to take it upon herself to try blag some black VIP wristbands for the festival! After chatting a load of crap about her manager being on the main stage and unable to get her tickets to her the bloke finally bought the story – well, until he said ‘could I just grab your ID then Ruby?’.

So off we trotted, paid for tickets and went to listen to some amazing music and watch a lot of funny people for six hours! It was such a chilled atmosphere and generally a fun day out! The festival was really the highlight of the whole time we have been in Oz. Harriet decided to wear these mad leggings and someone kept shouting “nice pants!” – she turned around and these two guys were sat down shouting abuse at everyone that walked passed them. Well not abuse but just catching their attention with stupid statements – the kinda guys that are offensive but not, the kinda guys you can’t help but laugh along with. Finding it really funny, Harriet sat down next to them and started talking. They both came to the conclusion that they had to hang around with us all day! They ended up being the funniest guys we had ever met – they generally did not give a crap about what anyone thought and they were there to let loose for a day! They taught us about muzzas too...

Check this out, we all know what a chav is right? Well in Australia they have muzzas! I had seen these freaks out and about but never really knew what to think of them – wasn’t sure if I should avoid them like the plague or if they were actually all right. So what defines a muzza? Muzzas do not come from any particular race or background. They are male, aged around 16 to 30, living in the suburbs of the major cities – especially Melbourne – and they are defined by their cars. No little Citroen Saxos or Peugeots for

the muzzas, they roll around in massive s***ty saloon cars with great big five-litre engines. They don’t follow road rules and often try to use their cars to intimidate other drivers. They travel in packs of at least 10 and frequent shopping plazas, clubs, festivals, events and raves. They don’t actually enjoy the music they are listening to and can’t dance for s**t. They attend these places to start fights (usually at a ratio of 10 to 1 in their favour) and sexually harass unsuspecting females who are clearly not interested in them.

They go to the gym most afternoons but only during peak times so that the maximum amount of people can check out their ‘fully sick’ muscles but only use the weights – never cardio. They hog gym equipment and generally leave their sweat on the machines for the next sucker to deal with. They pretty much overdose on steroids which makes them look ridiculous and generally make them abnormally aggressive.

Anyways, after a chilled day surrounded by wicked music and some cool friends it was 11pm and the music stopped. It was the end of Summerdayz but there was an after party and the casino was open! After all, this was my last time out before all the riding starts... We met up for a drink with our new mates Mark and Matt, then decided to head to the after party. Outside the casino is a massive line of taxis all waiting for their next big fare – the line was huge and they must have been waiting for ages. We only needed to go round the corner – probably only a 10-minute walk – but Mark wanted to get a taxi while Matt was trying to convince him that the taxi driver would kick off because he had waited so long for only a five dollar taxi ride! The thought of pissing the taxi driver off was more entertaining than getting to the club so we bundled in...

The cabbie claimed he didn’t know where the club was but assured us he knew a good place which would be busy. Mark was entertaining us too much in the front and distracted us from where the cabbie was taking us – it was only after Mark got bored of messing around that I started to think we were being driven a bit far out of the city! Eventually we were dropped off on some skanky strip and pointed towards a club – we just wanted to get out and after a \$25 taxi

ride we were looking forward to getting in somewhere to have a drink.

We walked towards the door and were given a real funny look by the bouncers – three guys and one girl. They checked our ID and let us in. I looked behind the curtains and it was pretty dead, then turned around and saw a few weird-looking fellas in line behind me. I’m not sure what was more troubling, the fact that they looked us up and down and decided to let us in or the fact that it was a gay bar! So we headed back out and got in another taxi with another driver who five minutes into the journey admitted he didn’t know where the club was either so we told him to take us to the casino – right back to where we started!

If I could put into words how funny this night ended up you would all need counselling after reading it. We ended up playing poker with a gay guy called Christopher and a real gambling addict we nicknamed ‘the lounge lizard’ along with our new mates Mark and Matt who we already knew were a bit loose. The Lounge Lizard offered everyone a drink and as he pointed to us all asking what we wanted he offered Christopher (by now renamed Columbus) a raspberry and orange juice! Columbus hit back with some very gay innuendoes and the banter started between them that would last all night – constant comedy that had the whole table almost crying as these two guys flirted with each other! The Lounge Lizard wasn’t gay I might add but he played the game well and they were actually both firing back at each other without ever taking offence.

So that’s everything up to New Year. The team are all back to work now and the new workshop is being prepped. My new bike arrives this weekend and then the motos will start. I had a really good month on the bike when I first arrived riding supercross with the team but now it’s back to motocross and getting set up for the new season. I’ve been in the gym all month and doing lots of cardio so now it’s bike time and I can’t wait. Sorry I can’t get any bike pics this time but DBR deadline is just a bit too early. Next month I’ll have pics of me on my new Kawasaki...

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DEALER	PHONE	AREA
MOTO PANDA	01403 805622	SCOTLAND
MOTO COUNTRY	01654 721800	WALES
MOTORHOME	01221 872227	WELSH ISLE
MOTO BUCHING	01633 612500	WALES
MX WORLD	01205 841172	WELSH ISLE
PATRICK MOTORCYCLES	01744 403522	LANCASHIRE
POKA RACING	01257 455468	GLOUCESTERSHIRE
RACE SPEC	01684 299499	WILTSHIRE
RJ RACING	01466 218768	BERKSHIRE
RUSSELLS MOTORCYCLES	02099 817000	NORFOLK
ST BLAZEN MOTORCYCLES	01726 810118	CORNWALL
TERRY RUDD MOTORCYCLES	01404 427400	UNCONTINENTAL
WILLIAMS MX	01952 248544	SHROPSHIRE
		WORCESTERSHIRE

DEALER	PHONE	AREA
DEVON WHEELS	08448 158620	WALES
DESIGNER MOTOCYCLES	01189 700845	HAMPSHIRE
DIXIE CYCLES	01982 664312	MIDDLESEX
DRAG LADIES	08456 121112	MANCHESTER
FREESTYLE	01892 784438	SUSSEX
GLATE 3 MOTOCYCLES	01756 799176	W. YORKSHIRE
HFS MOTORCYCLES	01279 451222	ESSEX
JW RACING	01922 211996	W. MIDLANDS
K & S RACING KENF	01792 431700	KENT
MICKEY COATS MOTORCYCLES	01413 327324	SCOTLAND
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